Week ending March 27 1954
Every Wednesday Fourpence

JOHN BULL

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DOUGLAS BADER

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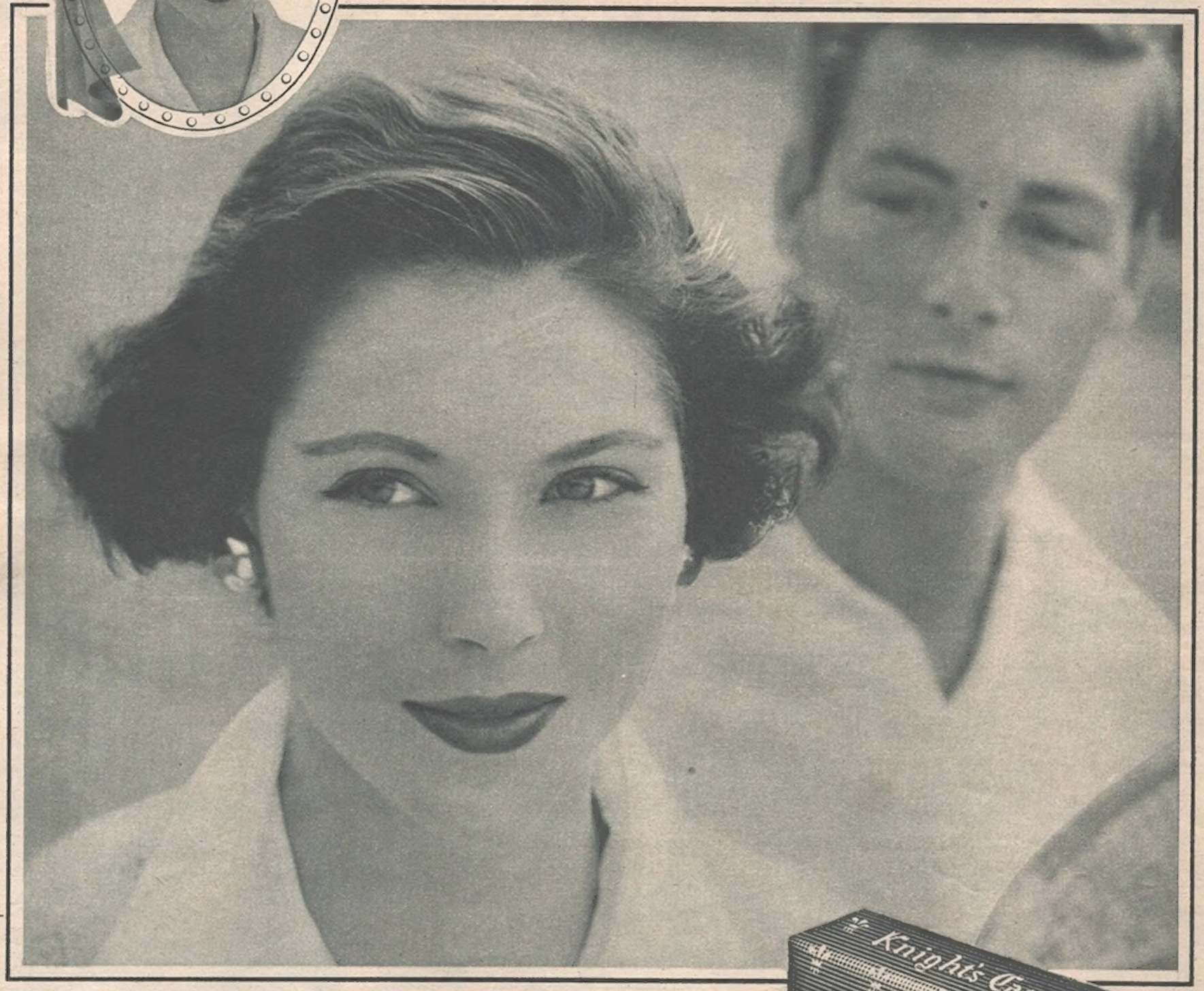

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EDITORIAL

Corner men

EVERY few days Mr. David Scott Cairns takes the chair at a sub-committee of the Monopolies and Restrictive Practices Commission. It must be a frustrating job for the fifty-two year old barrister. The Commission, of which he is the £5,000 a year chairman, works very hard and accomplishes virtually nothing.

It has just added metal window frames to the eight commodities it is investigating. Judging from past results, it will be many years before reports on the frame-makers are published—and even then nothing much will happen.

The Monopolies Commission was set up in 1949, after M.P.s had agreed that no single trade group should be allowed to corner business and force up prices.

SINCE then it has indicted six industries. But the trades concerned with electric lamps, electric cables, matches, rainwater goods and imported timber have not changed their ways. In November, the price of lamps went up again, and the Commission is "examining the justification." Only dental goods have become slightly cheaper.

MR. HAROLD WILSON
"Things must be speeded up"

The man who was President of the Board of Trade when the Commission was set up, Mr. Harold Wilson, comments: "The machinery has proved much slower than we hoped. It is now clear that not only must it be speeded up, but that there should be legislation to ban a wide range of monopolistic practices."

The Commission's first reports make disturbing reading. Only the insulin industry escaped serious criticism.

RECENTLY, Smethwick Health Committee wanted a thousand dustbins. It invited six different firms to tender prices—but they all quoted the same figure. The chairman of the committee complained that this was evidence of a price ring.

So did the head of Birmingham's transport when seven tenders for supplying bus tyres for three years turned out to be exactly the same.

The Commission has dutifully taken note of the complaints and has added dustbins and tyres to the list of goods to be investigated.

THERE are now 109 industries against which complaints have been received. At the present rate it will be at least 1980 before all the reports are ready.

And when the reports are published, what then? Mr. Peter Thorneycroft, who is now President of the Board of Trade, says he will "negotiate with the industries."

Mr. Thorneycroft is too mild. He must act quickly and positively if he means to make free enterprise *really* free.

THIS WEEK'S COVER

WITH the lawn seemingly sprouting six inches a day, Bill Dowsett has little doubt about which way this temporary conflict of interests will finally be resolved. Meanwhile, a little dreaming does no harm. He should know. The lawn of his garden at Hampton, Middlesex, is a very old enemy. "My wife, Betty, is a keen gardener," he says. "She knows the odd names of all the plants—and the odder things she expects me to do to them."

A glass of Andrews in the morning makes you feel *Fine!*

HERE'S WHY: Sparkling Andrews refreshes the mouth and helps to clean the tongue.

Effervescent Andrews is antacid; soothes your stomach; corrects digestive upsets; tones up the liver and checks biliousness.

Pleasant-tasting Andrews gently clears your system of harmful impurities, thus promoting inner cleanliness.

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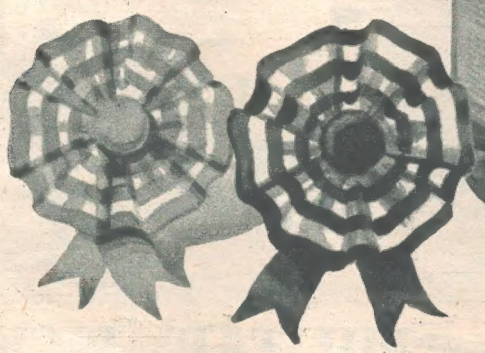
At work—at play, keep Lucozade by you, always!



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MARCH 27, 1954 VOL. 95 NO. 2491 PHONE: TEMPLE BAR 2468 GRAMS: HEROICALLY, WESTCENT, LONDON

FREE SPEECH

A school asks for help in teaching

I HAVE received a circular letter from the headmaster of my son's primary school asking for parents' help in teaching the children to read.

In the course of his letter he says: "In classes of forty or more children, the amount of individual attention your child can possibly receive in this subject is about one and a half minutes per day. It is not enough." He asks parents whose children are below average in reading ability to spend ten or fifteen minutes each evening helping them to prepare set pages to read to the teacher the next day. Other parents are asked to encourage their children to read for at least a quarter of an hour an evening. To my mind, this letter underlines the need for new schools to meet the problem of overcrowding. Most parents are only too anxious to help their children, but there are those who will not be bothered. Who will teach the children of such parents to read, if the school cannot give them individual attention?—C. LOADER, Haylease Crescent, Hereford.

Timber Merchant

DURING the latter part of the war, I worked in an office at an aircraft factory, sharing a desk with a younger man. We were both smokers. One day he brought a biscuit tin to work, and asked me to drop my spent matches into it. I admired what I took to be his tidiness, and did what he asked. Eventually, when the tin was nearly full, he wrapped it up to take home. "These matches will make grand firewood," he said. I made fun of him at the time, but now I hear that he is a very successful businessman.—E. J., Flintshire.

Power Point

MY little girl touched one of the bumpers of our car with her bare knee recently, and jumped back saying: "Oh! The car scratched me." I ran my hand over the bumper and could feel no sharp edges, so I thought that she must have been mistaken. But she felt a sting again later, and so did her sister. Then I realized that they were getting electric shocks from which I was protected by my rubber soles. I have heard since that the static electricity which builds up in a car through friction is a cause of car sickness, and that it can be conducted away by trailing a chain to provide an "earth."—E. M., Dundee.

A small charge of static electricity could build up in a car during its journeys, and the chain would "earth" it. There is no evidence that static electricity causes car sickness.

Back And Sides

AS I left the station in Rye Lane, Peckham, I was startled to see a tramp with the side of his head on fire studying his reflection in a shop window. I stopped, and watched him pat out the blaze. Then he took a match, and ignited a large tuft of hair on the other side of his head. He patted these flames out, too, and then applied the match yet again. The process was repeated until, obviously satisfied with his appearance, he put his matches in his pocket and went off. I continued on my way —to the barber. — G. S. COOPER, Croydon Road, Wallington, Surrey.

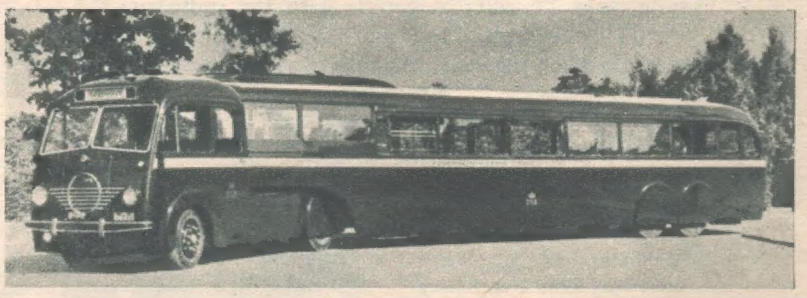
Accent On English

DURING the war, I was instructing African policemen in English. After their course, they went to the Police Training School for examinations to qualify for English language proficiency pay. One batch of my students did well enough in their written tests, but failed the oral. I asked them what had happened—they spoke English quite well to me. A sergeant gave me the explanation. "Bwana, the examiner could not speak English himself," he said. I made inquiries, and discovered that the examining officer was a Yorkshireman with a broad accent ("Free Speech," March 6). I am London-born. Someone from the police training school should have warned me.—E. M. W., Dublin.

. . . In Miami, Florida, recently I heard a group of American students trying to sing Harry Lauder's "Just A Wee Deoch-An'-Doris." Being a fan of the late Sir Harry, I helped them out. After the song, I explained that the Scots, Irish and Welsh have retained their own languages which may still be heard in parts of the British Isles. "And what nationality

Continued on page 6

Worms Can Turn In Denmark



DURING a visit to Copenhagen, I was shown one of the special long-distance buses which the Danes call "Scarlet Worms." It was the largest bus I had ever seen—a fifty-five feet long articulated vehicle powered by a 125-horsepower oil engine. There was central heating, and the bus could carry eighty passengers and more than half a ton of luggage. A Danish friend told me that the tractor part of the first of these buses (shown in the photograph above) and the engines of its two successors were made in Britain. "I expect you have many buses like this in your own country," he said. The remark showed that he knew nothing of our antiquated road system, and I told him something of the hazards—awkward turns and urban bottle necks—which an English Scarlet Worm would encounter.—H. CLARK, Shropshire.

The Scarlet Worms are owned by the Danish State Railways. No British public service vehicle may exceed thirty feet in length.

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Mint Spangles—another sweet treat
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— says this Liverpool woman.

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'Bismag' contains some of the quickest-acting ingredients known for neutralising stomach acid. That is why millions of sufferers all over the world — in 45 different countries — depend on this scientifically balanced antacid prescription in cases of indigestion, flatulence, heartburn and pain after meals. For quicker, surer relief ask your chemist for 'Bismag' ('Bisurated' Magnesia)—75 tablets—1/8d.

FREE SPEECH

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 4

are you?" one of the students asked. "Scottish," I replied. He looked very surprised, and said: "You speak such good English that I thought you were American." — HAROLD N. MAY, c/o Seafarers' Education Service, Balham High Road, London, S.W.17.

. . . The older people in the Lancashire cotton towns refer to the mistress of the house as "Hoo." Unaware of this, I called at a weaver's home to collect some money. An old man was seated by the fire. I said good morning, and explained why I had called. "Hoo pays it," said the old man. "That's what I want to know. Who pays it?" I asked. "Hoo pays it," he answered. A little impatiently, I repeated my request for payment. "Hoo pays it, and Hoo's gone airt," the old man said. "Who pays it, and who's gone out?" I echoed. Half rising from his chair, he shouted: "That's right, Hoo pays it and Hoo's gone airt. Now blooming well be telled and clear off."— W. W. MCMAHON, St. Philip's Avenue, Litherland, Liverpool.

The Miracle

A LARGE class of backward, difficult children at a school in Hertfordshire was put in my charge. It had broken the hearts of my predecessors. With this class I achieved what seemed like a miracle to the other teachers, and to the parents. I let the children eat sweets whenever they liked. This had a relaxing effect and took away tension. At the end of every lesson, I gave the children a few minutes of free time in which to read their comics or talk. I devoted several Saturdays to taking them to the Zoo, Windsor Castle and exhibitions in London. Gradually, the children came to see that I was their friend. In six months the "awful" class became one of the best loved and most progressive in the school. Children need sympathetic understanding.— HORACE DOWLING, Mackintosh Place, Cardiff.

Pirate Trio

A POST OFFICE detection van visited our road to trace radio pirates who were listening without a licence. I showed the official my licence when he knocked, and explained that I believed that all my four tenants had sets, but that they were out. He said that he would call back in a day or two to see their licences. When the

tenants came in, two of them were most worried. They admitted that they had not had licences for a couple of years at least. The third tenant said she had no set. I knew this was not true, and found out later that she hid her set after I spoke to her. Only one of the four had a current licence. —MRS. R., Surrey.

There were 9,500 prosecutions in 1953 for using radio and television sets without licences. Fines totalled more than £20,000.

Safety And Numbers

A FIRE prevention officer (JOHN BULL, February 27) has inspected all the halls in my borough, and regulations have been made limiting their seating. One hall which comfortably seats four hundred is now permitted to admit only 250 to any musical or dramatic performance. This makes it difficult for musical and dramatic societies to earn a profit. But there is no limit when the hall is used for whist drives and there are often 320 people at eighty tables. I have seen about five hundred people seated and standing in the same hall for a political meeting.—K. G. T., Kent.

In the Kent County Council area, a fire prevention officer can only advise the authority which licenses a hall for stage plays or music and dancing. The Home Office recommends that the size of a closely packed audience should be limited so that there is six square feet of space, including gangways, per person. For dancing, there should be ten square feet per person. No licences are required for whist drives or meetings, so no limits can be laid down.

. . . I was in Deolali during the war. One morning the locality was shaken by a loud explosion. I investigated and found that an Indian had been standing on a ten-gallon fuel drum and working on it with an acetylene cutter. The drum cannot have been quite empty because it went up with a flash and the Indian completely disappeared. His friends were wondering what to do next, when they heard cries coming from the top of a nearby tree. The man had been carried up there by the explosion. It was the nearest thing to the Indian rope trick I ever heard of.—G. MOORE, Scarborough.

Coming to John Bull

BHOWANI JUNCTION

An outstanding novel by JOHN MASTERS

See announcement on page 16

Family Formula

GRANT TIGNER'S cover-painting (JOHN BULL, March 6) of the father painting the family cot blue for the son who has followed two daughters demonstrates an exception which proves a rule. The rule in this case is that if the first two children in any family are of the same sex, the third child will follow them. But the fourth is very often of a different sex. —E. DONOVAN, Lingfield, Surrey.

Nature knows no such rule, says a doctor. The order in which children are born into a family has no effect at all upon their sex.

Copper Pine

DURING a visit to a small island in Loch Maree, I found an old wishing well full of pennies and dead leaves. At its side there once grew a tall pine. When there was no more room in the well for their pennies, people who came to wish hammered them into the tree instead. Eventually, it died and now it is propped up at an angle and covered with pennies throughout its length. Thousands of visitors come to the island every year, but they never interfere with the coins.— D. M. MACRAE, Uddingston, Glasgow.

There are superstitions about many British wells. The Cornish once believed that a child baptized with water from the well of St. Ludgvan would never hang.

Letters intended for publication should be as brief as possible and include the sender's full name and address. John Bull pays a guinea for every letter printed, and at usual rates for readers' photographs. Readers with personal problems should send inquiries (other than medical) to John Bull Free Advice Service with a stamped addressed envelope for reply.

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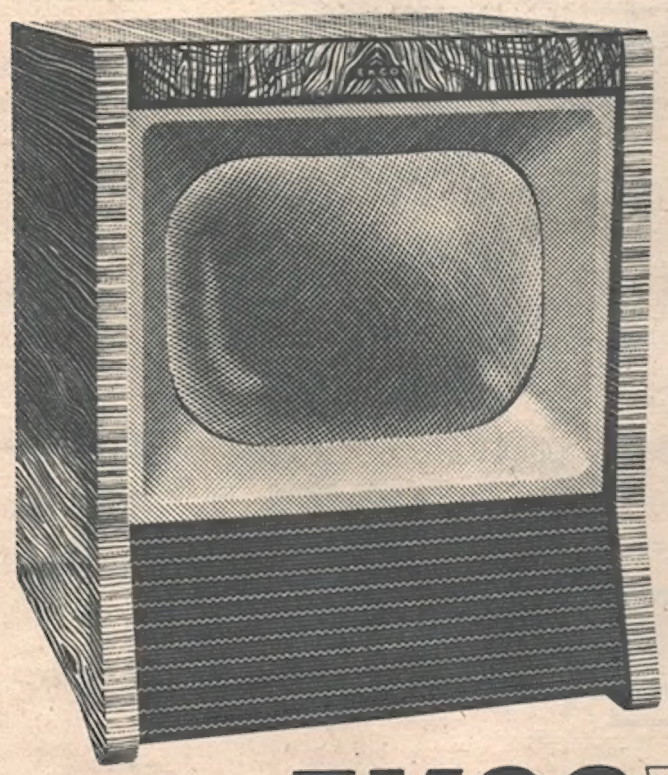

MODEL T216
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57 GNS. (tax paid).

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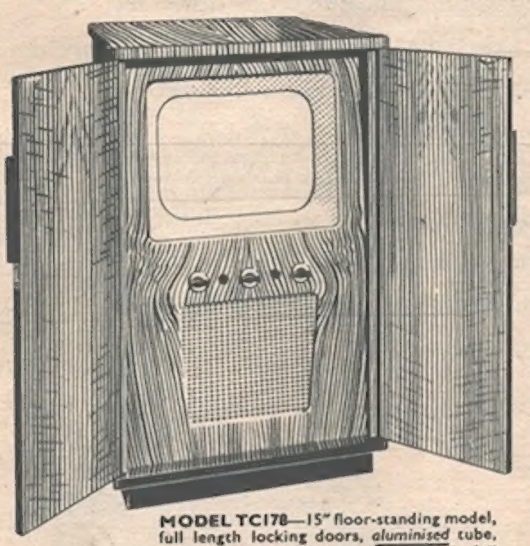

MODEL TC178—15" floor-standing model, full length locking doors, *aluminised* tube, optical filter, Ekco 'Spot-Wobble', full automatic *picture and sound control*, Ekco 'Triple-Link' chassis. **105 GNS.** (tax paid).

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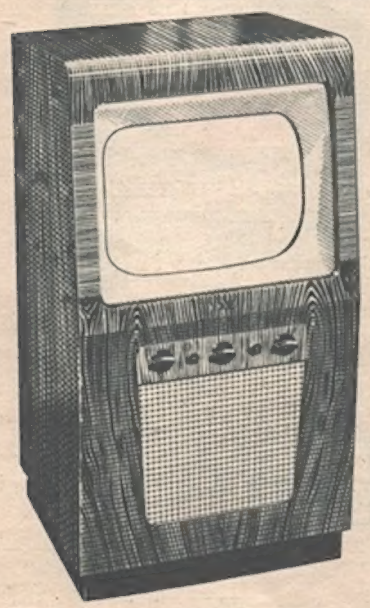
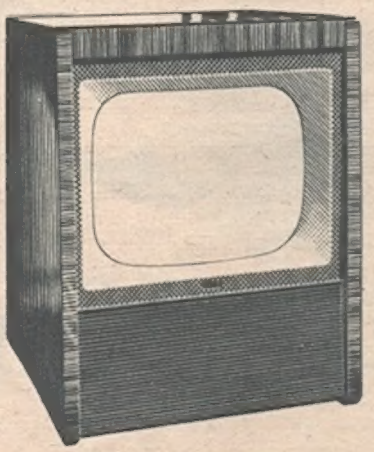
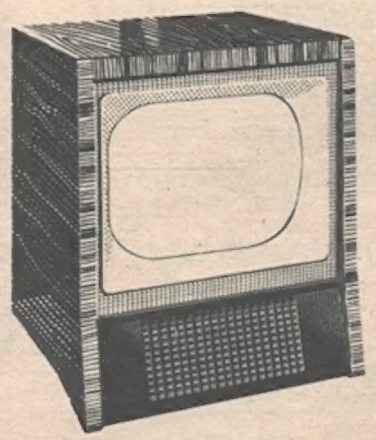


MODEL TC196—15" floor-standing model, *aluminised* tube, optical filter, Ekco 'Spot-Wobble', full automatic *picture and sound control*, Ekco 'Triple-Link' chassis. **85 GNS.** (tax paid).



MODEL T207—15" tube table receiver with *aluminised* tube, optical filter. Ekco 'Spot-Wobble', full automatic *picture and sound control*, Ekco 'Triple-Link' chassis. **76 GNS.** (tax paid)



MODEL T205—14" table model, *aluminised* tube, optical filter, full automatic *picture and sound control*, Ekco 'Triple-Link' chassis. **63 GNS.** (tax paid).

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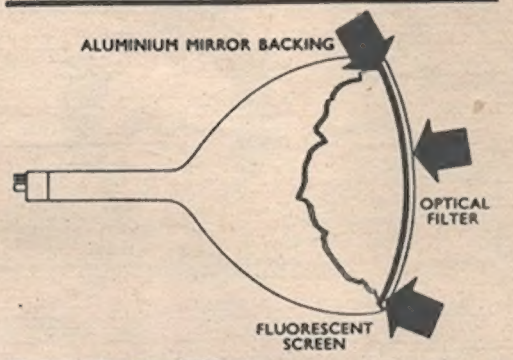

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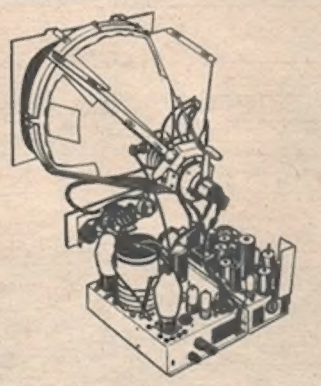

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REACH FOR THE SKY

The life of the legless hero

DOUGLAS BADER

ON THE MORNING of December 14, 1931, some young pilots were drinking coffee in the clubhouse of Woodley Aerodrome, near Reading, and, as, usual, were talking shop. Among them was Douglas Robert Steuart Bader, a twenty-one year old ex-Cranwell pilot who had distinguished himself in the aerobatic flying at the Hendon display that year. While he was being questioned on aerobatics someone suggested that he give a demonstration " beat-up " of the airfield.

Bader said no, he did not want to. The Hendon show had been in a Gamecock, and the Bulldog he was now flying was not quite the same. (He also remembered, uncomfortably, that his squadron leader had had him on the mat for low flying only a few weeks before.) The matter was dropped until they were leaving, and a young man suggested it again. Bader again said no, and someone grinned and made a barbed joke about being " windy." He made it sound like a dare. Bader could never resist a dare.

Another pilot, Richardson, took off first, and then a tight-lipped, angry Bader. In the air Bader banked steeply, turning back, and slanting down for a low run across the field. A knot of young men watched from the clubhouse. Just above the grass, rocking a little in the thermals, the Bulldog swept across the boundary fence, rushing at a spot beside the clubhouse. The nose lifted a fraction and she began rolling to the right.

He had the stick well over . . . a little top rudder to hold the nose up . . . stick forward to keep it up and, as she rolled upside down, throttle back to keep the engine alive. He felt her starting to drop.

Stick *hard* over now; the wings were vertical, glinting in the sun, and she was dropping fast. Grimly he was reefing her round and she was rolling out of it fast when the left wing-tip hit the grass and jerked the nose down. As propeller and cowling exploded into the ground the engine tore out, bouncing in a cloud of flying dirt, and the Bulldog seemed to crumple and cartwheel into a

JOHN BULL PHOTOGRAPH BY ARTHUR WHITTINGTON

tangle very fast. Pinned by his straps, Bader felt nothing, but heard only a terrible noise.

All the airfield was suddenly still, except for the fierce boil of dust round the awkward heap in the middle that looked like crushed brown paper. As the dust began to drift the men by the clubhouse were running.

Gently, as the mind came into focus, Bader was aware that his knees were buzzing as though he had hit his funnybone. The eyes wandered down and absorbed with curiosity that his legs were in peculiar positions. At least his right leg was. He could not see the left leg and forgot about it. (It had buckled under the collapsed seat so that he was sitting on it.) His right foot was tucked over in the far right-hand corner and the clean white overalls were torn at the knee and staining in blood that was pumping in slow little squirts and spreading in filmy waves. There was his knee through the blood, and something sticking through it. Looked a bit like the rudder bar. Very odd.

Now he became aware of things beyond the cockpit: voices, and people moving, but they seemed shadowy and remote. A man in a white coat was standing beside the cockpit. There was a face, and a hand holding out a glass. A voice said: "Here you are, sir. Have some of this brandy." (It was a steward from the clubhouse.)

Automatically, with no effort, he answered casually: "No, thanks. I don't drink."

The man leaned over to urge him and saw blood spurting in the cockpit. He turned very pale and then he stood back and drank the brandy himself.

Trapped In The Wreckage

A big, ruddy-faced young man leaned in and started undoing his harness, saying things in a gentle voice. He let him go ahead, and then became unconscious for a while.

Jack Cruttenden, the big man, an Australian student pilot at the club, found he could not lift Bader out of the crushed cockpit. He started tearing at bits of the wreckage and other men did the same. Someone brought a hacksaw and cut away a twisted centre-section strut. Bader partly came to and sensed, more than knew, that Cruttenden was gently lifting him out.

Consciousness was lapping and receding in waves. He was lying on the grass. Someone was taking his shoes off. Cruttenden's hands were doing something to his right knee: they felt very strong and were covered in blood. He felt no pain.

Then he was lying in an ambulance and men were bent over his legs. He tried to sit up but could not get very far and watched the men with detached interest. The legs of his overalls and trousers had gone somewhere, and Cruttenden's fingers seemed to be in his right knee (holding the popliteal artery). After a few moments he got bored with watching. He could feel the ambulance was moving and wanted to see what was happening outside. He said to Cruttenden: "Look, I think I'll get up now."

He started struggling up on his elbows and Cruttenden said: "Take it easy. Won't be long now."

Bader said petulantly: "Oh, to hell with this. I want to get out. This is damn silly."

He tried to struggle up again, and Cruttenden took one hand from the knee and pressed it gently against his chest to hold him down. Being held down by a stranger was irritating. He twisted a shoulder off the stretcher, hooked his right fist up and hit Cruttenden on the chin. He felt he could not hit very hard lying down.

Cruttenden, looking at him with a pacifying grin, said: "Ease it up, mate."

Having hit him, Bader felt suddenly feeble and foolish. But honour was satisfied—he had made the gesture—and anyway he had completely lost interest in getting up now. He lay back and did not remember any more.

The ambulance weaved swiftly through the Reading traffic, swung into Redlands Road and stopped in front of the casualty door of the Royal Berkshire Hospital. Within a minute he was on a table with the duty doctor tying the artery and swabbing the pulpy mess in both legs where the bones had torn through. The right leg looked nearly off at the knee and the left shin was broken and badly splintered, the torn flesh full of oil and dirt. The patient's pulse was getting weaker, very thready, so that the doctor could hardly feel it and broke off to give a heart stimulant. He straightened both legs and put them in box splints, then got Sister Thornhill in Benyon Ward on the house phone.

"There's a young man coming up with multiple injuries, shock and loss of blood from an aeroplane crash. Get him warm in bed to ease the shock. I don't think there's much we can do." (Sister Thornhill recognized the tone. After messages like that the patient was sometimes dead by the time he arrived.)

Soon they wheeled Bader in, now deeply unconscious, and she packed hot-water bottles and blankets round the body, which was very cold. The resident surgical officer examined him briefly. No chance of operating yet, he said when he straightened up. Perhaps later, if he lasted, but there was no real hope.

Best Surgeon In England

Sister Thornhill remembered that Leonard Joyce, who was probably the best surgeon in England, was operating at the hospital that day and rang up the theatre, but they said he had just left. Hurrying as fast as she dared, she found him in the entrance hall putting on his coat to go. She said: "Excuse me, Mr. Joyce, but we've just admitted a young Air Force officer after a bad crash. Could you have a look at him?"

The rest was understood: she had assisted Joyce at many operations and he was a man of few words. He took his coat off and followed her back to the ward, and shortly was saying that he would wait and see if the patient came out of the shock enough to try to operate. He was young and strong. They must at least try.

When Harry Day, Bader's squadron leader, rang the hospital from Kenley they were very guarded and he understood perfectly clearly that Bader was dying. He sent a telegram to Bader's mother and, on the hospital's advice, to his uncle, Cyril Burge—also in the R.A.F.—who was at Aldershot.

About two o'clock Sister Thornhill noticed that the patient was breathing more noticeably and his pulse was also stronger. Gradually his condition kept improving, and Joyce, surprised, put it down to his physical fitness.. At 3.30 he decided to try to operate.

"That Leg Must Come Off"

On the operating table Bader came to and lay looking up at a large light and a white ceiling, not knowing where he was or caring, becoming aware of a hospital smell and a man in a long white surgeon's coat and cap standing by his head who looked scholarly and said in a quiet voice: "Hallo, old chap. I see you've had a bit of an accident. Don't worry. Just lie back and we'll soon have you fixed up."

Bader looked at him vaguely, and as this sank in he said: "Don't give me an anaesthetic, will you. I can't stand the stuff."

"Don't worry," the man said, "we'll see things are all right." He seemed to exude warmth and compassion.

Afterwards Bader could not remember getting the anaesthetic. As he was going under, the plates came in from the X-ray room and Joyce held them up, still wet, to the light. First the right leg. He passed it almost instantly to the nurse, saying briefly, "That must come off." He

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PAUL BRICKHILL, thirty-seven year old Australian author, has already written three best-sellers—*The Great Escape, The Dam Busters* and *Escape—Or Die*. His life story of Douglas Bader is his finest work yet.

Brickhill, who was a fighter pilot and prisoner of war like Bader, took two years to research and write *Reach For The Sky*. There were Bader's documents, manuscripts and photographs to look through, reports to check, friends to interview. Then with a recording machine he talked with Bader night after night for months, gathering the whole story in vivid detail.

Reach For The Sky is published by Collins at 16s., and a record first edition of 120,000 copies has been printed.

Bader (seated second right) at St. Edward's. Eighteen, he was considered bumptious by some. But the Warden found him "absolutely full of beans . . . too vital to stay in the background"

Baby Douglas was not expected to be born alive, and after the birth Jessie Bader underwent a major operation. Recovering, she sailed to India with her engineer husband, Frederick (this picture was taken just before sailing). Douglas was left behind and did not see her again till he was two

hesitated over the left leg and finally passed it across without comment. The plates of the abdomen and head showed only two ribs broken, though the face was gashed and a tooth had come through the upper lip.

Joyce worked fast. The patient was too shaky for thorough surgery; there was time only to try to patch things temporarily in the race with the imminence of more shock and fatal collapse. He severed the right leg above the smashed knee, but that did not take long because it was almost off already. When he turned to the left leg the patient was sinking and there was just time to clean the torn mess and seal it, hoping no infection would set in, and inject a saline solution. Bader was close to death when they got him to a private room and started working on him for post-operative shock.

Cyril Burge reached the hospital and waited. By nine o'clock Bader was still alive, but shock was draining him of the last resistance. He was nearly pulseless, cold to the touch and still deeply unconscious.

Joyce went out to Cyril Burge. Bader, he reported, was not expected to live till the morning. . . .

In 1909, twenty-two years before, another doctor had expressed similar doubts about Bader's chances of survival. He had warned Bader's mother, Jessie, during her second pregnancy that the baby might not be born alive and that it would be risky for her to go ahead with it. But, rather imperiously, she resisted any interference. A tall and strikingly attractive girl of twenty with a cloud of black hair piled in thick Edwardian waves, Mrs. Bader was sometimes emotional and generally wilful.

Frederick Bader (pronounced "Bahder") brought his young wife and the other baby, Frederick, or 'Derick, home to England from India on furlough for the birth and they took a house in St. John's Wood, London. The doctor and midwife arrived on February 21, 1910, and Frederick Bader walked restlessly round the house. Jessie's sister, Hazel, and the German nursemaid waited hours outside the bedroom door until a thin but persistent cry broke the quiet. Soon the door opened and the doctor came out with the pleased look of a family G.P. who has seen his friends through a crisis.

"The little trouble-maker has arrived," he said benignly. "It's a boy." The squalling kept sounding through the door and the doctor observed that the "little trouble-maker" seemed to have a talent for expressing himself forcibly. (The doctor is not alive now to marvel at the unwitting accuracy of his foresight.)

Baby And Mother Separated

Three days after Douglas was born in St. John's Wood, both mother and baby caught measles, and as soon as both were better Jessie had to have a major operation. From the start baby and mother were virtually separated. Jessie recovered, though she had no more children, and then the family was due back in India. Douglas was only a few months old; a little young, they thought, for India's climate, so he was left with relatives on the Isle of Man.

He was almost two by the time he was taken out to join the family in Sukkur, and that may have been the beginning of the loneliness that has been deep within him ever since. He was a stranger in India, like an affectionate puppy before he has been smacked for wetting the floor. 'Derick had been receiving the attention lavished on an only child and the new boy did not fit in. Aunt Hazel, visiting the home in Sukkur one day, saw Douglas's face covered in little sores. Jessie said 'Derick had been pinching bits of skin off his face. 'Derick at four had vitality from both parents. Douglas, two and a half, was sweet-tempered but subdued.

Six months later, servants were constantly on duty to keep them apart—Douglas had begun fighting back like a tiger. It seemed that he, too, had inherited a bold vigour. From then on he always fought his own battles and never cried if he lost. The only times he cried were when his parents and 'Derick went visiting and left him behind, which they often did.

In 1913 his father resigned his job in India to study law, and the family left for England and took a house in Kew. Then the war came and Frederick Bader was commissioned in the Royal Engineers and went to France. Douglas, now a spirited five-year-old, was ever ready to show his mother and 'Derick that he was no minor underling, and 'Derick, finding he would leap at any challenge, used to dare him to carry out hazardous or punishable exploits. Never refusing a dare, Douglas came to be considered as much the naughtier of the two.

One hurtful incident was when a ball bounced over tall, spiked railings into a locked churchyard near Kew Bridge. Dared by 'Derick to climb over the railings, Douglas ran at them and pulled himself to the top, where his foot slipped

In front of a Gamecock, Douglas Bader (left) poses with Harry Day and Geoffrey Stephenson. It was summer, 1931. Twenty-one year old Pilot Officer Bader was on top of the world. At the Hendon air display, he and Day had just put on "the most thrilling spectacle ever seen in exhibition flying"

and his behind was impaled on one of the sharp spikes. White-faced, he hung on with his hands, unable to move. At last the nanny arrived and prised him clear and he walked silently half a mile to the house, gripping her hand with pain. The doctor put eight stitches in his rump without the patient letting out a murmur.

The boys seldom saw their father, who was in the thick of it in France. In 1917 shrapnel wounded Major Bader badly in the head. They could not get all the shrapnel out, but he recovered and went back into the fighting.

Douglas followed 'Derick to Temple Grove, a prep school near Eastbourne. It was a pleasant old school with plenty of playing fields. The régime quickly drew the new boy into organized games and overnight he seemed to flare up like a Roman candle with eagerness. It was the perfect outlet for his mercurial nature and he literally threw himself into rugger, a gritty and indestructible small boy bouncing up as fast as he was knocked down, which was often. Fast on his feet and fast thinking, he shone as fly-half, and after the first few games was promoted to more senior teams, finding himself matched against bigger boys. It only made him more determined to hold his own.

He Refused To Be Beaten

In the gym he limbered up on the parallel bars or the horizontal bar, the vaulting horse or in the boxing ring; he would try anything, not just once but till he had mastered it, hating to let anything beat him. Or anyone. He lost count of the times he fell off the parallel bars, but he learned to fall without hurting himself; in fact he lost all fear of falling, and that, as he later discovered, was one of the most important things that ever happened to him.

The war ended, but still the boys rarely saw their father, who was still in the army, still on the Continent and busy helping to repair war damage. Even after that he was retained in France on the War Graves Commission. Then in 1922 a War Office telegram came to the house in Kew regretting that Major Bader had died in St. Omer as a result of his old wounds. Though the boys had seen little of their father, it did not make Douglas feel any more secure. Later, a more practical effect had to be faced: 'Derick had already gone on to King's School at Canterbury. Now there was doubt whether funds were enough to send Douglas to public school, too.

The one solution was to win a scholarship, and a very loath boy began studying, in the galling position of having to prove his reports: "could do better if he tried." At term's end the headmaster, with pleasure, told him he had won a scholarship to St. Edward's School, Oxford.

Too Wild For The Vicar

About this time Jessie Bader, dark and vividly good looking at thirty-two, remarried. The boys' step-father was the vicar of Sprotborough (Yorkshire), the Reverend Ernest William Hobbs, who had been a gentle bachelor of thirty-seven before his life was so radically stirred up. The vicar was too mild for his intransigent new family. He tried to institute family prayers after breakfast, but Douglas and 'Derick scuffled and fidgeted and giggled so much that he gave it up. Jessie was inclined to blame Douglas, and he began to feel more at home out of doors.

That summer he was packed off for a week with his aunt and uncle, Cyril and Hazel Burge, at Cranwell, where Cyril was adjutant of the Royal Air Force College. It was not then the grand place it is now: no fine white façades planted four-square in tailored acres, but a few weedy buildings and barrack huts straggling along the side of a large field which was the aerodrome.

From Hazel and Cyril the welcome was warm. Thirteen-year-old Douglas had never been near aeroplanes before, and when the quiet, good-humoured Cyril sat him in the cockpit of an Avro 504 trainer the thick hair almost vanished as the small boy bent over the controls like a terrier. Later he stood for hours in Cyril's garden watching the bellowing Avros taking off over his head as the cadets practised "circuits and bumps." Every morning at 6.30 he joined the cadets in training runs, doggedly trying to keep up. He admired them enormously; they seemed so fit, and after a couple of days he spent less time watching the flying and more time with the cadets at cricket and athletics.

When Hazel and Cyril were putting him in the train for home, he said with what sounded like a catch in his voice (though it was probably only the voice breaking): "Crumbs, I want to come back to Cranwell as a cadet." Cyril thought he had a convert then, but he was a little premature. The flying bug was not in Douglas yet. Interest—yes, as a boy likes dogs and catapults: but it was the games that drew him. Soon he forgot even that because he went to St. Edward's, and there was all the sport he wanted.

Games instantly claimed his interest and absorbed excess energy. He played house cricket down on the canal fields, clouted a punching ball in the gym and swam in the pool, screened by shrubs and hedges, where everyone splashed about naked. School became his real life, not only the playing fields but the little things in the background—the red blankets on the iron beds in the dormitories, the overgrown patch in the middle of the quad known as "The Jungle," the "San," the "Crystal Palace" (main lavatories), "Hell" (the mysterious basement room where the textbooks were stored), and Hall, where they clattered in to the long refectory tables and ate and chattered like sparrows till the gavel rapped on the wooden block, and everyone stood while the Warden intoned a Latin prayer.

As winner of a scholarship he was expected to shine in the classroom but, as at Temple Grove, he did no more work than the minimum required to avoid trouble. His darting mind picked up lessons easily, and at prep, half-hidden from prefectorial eyes in the battered "horse-boxes" of the day-room, his mind wandered to more sporting matters.

Shot At Woman In Bath

Back home for the holidays, 'Derick and Douglas bought air-guns, and a reign of terror began in Sprotborough until the day Douglas saw through a bathroom window the pale form of a noted local lady about to step into the bath. Someone dared him, and a moment later the pellet smashed through the splintering glass, followed by a squeal. The sharpshooter vanished and later had a heated argument with 'Derick about the suffering inflicted by an air-gun pellet. 'Derick demonstrated by shooting Douglas in the shoulder at point-blank range, and that started

That November, Bader played rugby for the Services. His "cap" for England was certain

Then, on December 14, 1931, came the crash in which Bader lost his legs. In front (right) of the wreckage of his plane—"an awkward heap that looked like crushed brown paper"—are his two shoes

a scuffle which ended with Jessie confiscating the guns.

The two boys were good friends now, making common cause against authority, though they were beginning to have affection for "Bill" Hobbs, the gentle vicar, who tolerated their peccadilloes with resignation and was not above taking off his clerical collar and going to the races for the day.

Back at school, in the summer of 1925, Douglas was "capped" for cricket, aged only fifteen and the youngest boy in the team. He finished the season top of both batting and bowling averages for the First Eleven.

A Moment Of Happiness

But it was winter he was waiting for. He liked the aggressive rough and tumble of rugger above everything. On the Thursday before the first game the captain pinned the names of the First Fifteen on the board under the cloisters of Big School, and Douglas, looking over the heads of the huddle round it, saw his own name scrawled there as fly-half. He did not shout or make any outward show, but a glow flushed right through him and he walked away soaked with quiet, fulfilled happiness. It was the warmest moment of his life. On the Saturday he played, almost broke his nose in a tackle, had blood drawn from a gashed lip, scored a try and thoroughly distinguished himself by his fiery vigour. He was still only fifteen, again the youngest in the school team, and thereafter was never dropped except through illness.

A report in the *School Chronicle* of a match not long after said: "Bader did as he chose and scored seven tries." (No question now of him being second to 'Derick, or second to anyone else.) The Warden clearly remembers his jaunty figure striding around the quad, hands in pockets, "absolutely full of beans."

At Easter his mother told him she did not think they would be able to keep him on at St. Edward's after the next term. On a parson's stipend they could not afford the fees. Though Douglas's scholarship had helped so much, it still cost an extra £100 a year to keep him at St. Edward's. Though school was the only thing he cared about, Bader was not greatly upset. He was showing a peculiar capacity for shutting his mind to disagreeable things until he had to face them.

Halfway through the next term, Walter Dingwall, a reserved young history master who also acted as bursar, sent for him and said: "I'm very sorry, Bader, but we've just had a letter from your mother to say that she does not think you will be able to return here next term."

For a few minutes the words brought the reality unpleasantly close.

"Don't worry," Dingwall said. "I feel it would be a pity if you had to leave. We'll see what we can do about it."

A week later Bader had put it right out of his mind. He was playing for the First Eleven again, boxing and running for his House, and had just been made a House Prefect. At the end of term he went home for the holidays, but no one said anything about leaving school and after the holidays he went back to St. Edward's again.

The Warden, the Rev. H. E. Kendall, made him a school prefect with the privilege of wielding a cane and of possessing a study in "The Beehive," a quaint little octagonal building where the rooms were tiny triangles just big enough for a boy, a desk and chair and a trunk covered with cushions. One or two thought Bader was getting bumptious, but the Warden felt it was mostly that he was too full of vitality to sit in the background. Underneath, Kendall detected a sense of responsibility that should be fostered. Other boys all respected him greatly, an acid test, and Kendall liked his spontaneous friendliness and the way he could talk to a master without being "on guard."

Hard Study Did Not Appeal

At lunch in Hall one day, the Warden asked him what he was going to do when he left school, and Bader said simply that he did not know. Lately he had begun asking himself the same question. Go on to Oxford? He could probably win a scholarship, but that would mean hard study, which was repulsive. Besides, what would he read at Oxford? Classics? History? Neither appealed. Certainly not maths. 'Derick was talking of going out to South Africa in engineering but that did not appeal either. As he did so often with tedious things like textbooks, he put the problem out of his mind and lived on in the agreeable present.

Shortly before Christmas an old boy, Roy Bartlett, now at Cranwell, visited the school, and Bader remembered his own visit there five years earlier, especially the games. Flying might be fun. That night he wrote to Uncle Cyril asking what his chances were of getting into Cranwell as a cadet.

Cyril Burge had left Cranwell and was now personal assistant to Air Chief Marshal Sir Hugh Trenchard, Chief of the Air Staff. With the satisfaction of a match-maker, Cyril wrote back saying that Douglas was just the type they wanted and he would do everything he could to help. There was one catch. Cyril pointed out that it would cost Jessie and the vicar about £150 a year to send him to Cranwell, and the course lasted two years. Could they afford it?

Mother Said No To Flying

Douglas took the question home and Jessie quickly settled it: (a) she did not like flying, (b) she did not think Douglas should go into the Air Force, and (c) they could not possibly afford £150 a year. She added: "You wouldn't even be at St. Edward's now but for the kindness of Mr. Dingwall."

"What d'you mean?" He was puzzled.

"I didn't want you to know yet," his mother said, "but Mr. Dingwall has been paying the rest of your fees since 1926."

This news staggered him, more so as he knew his mother had never met Dingwall, who was such a reserved person that he himself hardly knew the master.

Back at school he went to thank Dingwall, and the master, looking very embarrassed, shrugged it off with a laugh and got off the subject by asking him what he was going to do when he left. Bader mentioned that he had hoped to get into the R.A.F.

"Something might be arranged," Dingwall said thoughtfully.

Shortly after, another letter came from Burge saying that six prize cadetships were given every year to Cranwell, which meant virtual free entry. Several hundred boys fancied them, and the academic standard was high. Did

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HEART OF A LION

by PATRICK RYAN

ILLUSTRATED BY TANAT JONES

Lions! To poor, persecuted Mr. Whibley the name itself was a thrill. If only he were half as proud and masterful—what a man he would be!

"LIONS!" Tendrill snorted the word loudly enough to be heard throughout the ground floor of Bodkin's Emporium. "But," ventured Miss Copley as she took her parcel, "the circus posters say they are very dangerous."

"Dangerous? Never, my dear lady. They fit them with rubber teeth, gorge them with meat, and inject them with bromides. In any case, they are cowardly beasts."

Mr. Whibley, on Fabrics, was cutting a length of brocade for Lady Tiptree, Bodkin's Number One Customer. His scissors trembled at the last remark. Tendrill saw that he was rising to the bait, and pressed on.

"It is a popular fallacy, madam, that the lion is the king of beasts. Actually, it is one of the greatest cowards. It is afraid of mice, ants, lizards, human beings. . . ."

Mr. Whibley's scissors slipped sideways across the brocade.

"It is not true, Miss Copley," he called excitedly. "Mr. Tendrill is deceiving you."

He ran out from behind his counter, holding his pince-nez to his nose, his bald head glistening with emotion. He trod on Lady Tiptree's Pekinese. It started to whimper. The passionless atmosphere of the emporium became suddenly alive and crackling as everyone—Lady Tiptree, other customers, the Pekinese, the faceless souls on Woollens, Glassware, Haberdashery and Floor-coverings—turned and gazed at the little man who scampered from Fabrics to Linens.

Haberdashery, the floor Gestapo, pressed the house-telephone button for Mr. Bodkin's secretary. In a happy voice, she hissed, "Trouble on Linens!"

Mr. Whibley faced Miss Copley and beat out his words on a pile of tray-cloths, hard-wearing, dainty, cannot be repeated at two and eleven.

"The lion, Miss Copley, is not a coward. There is no animal in the jungle that will not flee from the lion. Even the elephant, the tiger, the rhinoceros. . . ."

A plump hand descended on his shoulder. The proprietor, Mr. Bodkin himself, beamed along the counters with his shopkeeper's smile.

"Mr. Whibley, I see that Lady Tiptree is at your counter."

Mr. Whibley blushed and slunk away. Mr. Bodkin swept Miss Copley to the door upon a sea of unction, petted the Pekinese to silence, snipped away the damaged brocade, wrapped the length for Lady Tiptree, and bowed her out. Then he swept back through the store.

"Mr. Whibley," he said. "I will see you in my office at midday, please."

Tendrill laced his hands over his small paunch and smirked.

"And you, Mr. Tendrill," went on Mr. Bodkin. "At one o'clock."

At five to twelve Mr. Whibley left Fabrics in charge of his junior, Miss Penny Lawrence. Her yellow hair fell across her face and covered one eye as she leaned over the counter towards Linens. At eighteen she could still be angered by injustice. Her vocabulary, however, was not adequate to the occasion.

"You're a pig, Mr. Tendrill, a rotten pig. You only get at Mr. Whibley about his old lions to make trouble. You're—you're a rotten pig . . . . a pig, that's what you are."

Tendrill, twenty years her senior, maintained an uncertain masculine silence. His attacker burst into tears and left for the cloakroom.

Having spoken at length of the thirty-two years' service he had received from Mr. Whibley, and of his horror at the morning's incident, Mr. Bodkin was warming to the admonition.

"Your obsession with lions, their habits and their history, Mr. Whibley, is becoming ridiculous. A man must have a hobby, but—really! I must insist that during the period of the day which you spend in my employ, you will try to forget these animals. For the moment, we will say no more about it. I trust you will not force me to reconsider the wisdom of this leniency."

Mr. Whibley signified respectful agreement, and withdrew, walking slowly and white-faced back to Fabrics. He found Penny restoring her face before lunch. She glanced at him sympathetically.

"I told Tendrill off properly," she said. "'You leave him alone if you know what's good for you,' I said. He sort of cringed."

"Thank you, Penny," said Mr. Whibley. Taking his sandwiches, he made for the door.

Penny gazed into the mirror and powdered her nose. "'Tendrill,' I said, 'you've got a yellow streak a yard wide. You're nothing but a——'" Again a suitable epithet evaded her.

She noticed that her lipstick was smudged, and pursed her mouth to silence in the mechanics of its repair.

MR. WHIBLEY sat on a bench in the park and considered life. The trouble had started with the arrival of the lion-skin in Uncle Alfred's effects. Uncle Alfred had been the black sheep of the family, but he had outlived the many respectable uncles, and had left his all to Mr. Whibley. He was found dead in a native bar in Accra.

There was a card pinned to the lion skin which Mr. Whibley subsequently received. *"Ceremonial dress of a witch-doctor of the Leoki, a tribe which inhabits the Kundu valley. The Leoki worship the lion as a sacred animal, and believe that the elders of the tribe are reincarnated in the shape of lions."*

The skin, which was of the male animal, was curiously padded inside, and strips of pliable leather ran from the legs to the shoulders and criss-crossed about the back and thighs. It was not a spread-eagled skin, but was made into the complete form of a lion with just a slit of three feet or so in the stomach.

Mr. Whibley had held it against himself. It seemed just his size. He slipped his head and shoulders through the slit, worked his hands into the forelegs, and his feet into the back legs. Dropping on to all-fours, he padded over to the wardrobe mirror, and looked through the yellow glass of the eyes.

He saw a lion. The skin fitted him perfectly. The padding was so placed that it turned the contours of a small man into those of a lion. The leather strips held the padding tight around him and, pulling like muscles, constrained his movements into a creditable semblance of the stiff-legged stalk of the animal. There was a bone stub which fitted into his mouth. When he moved his head up and down, the jaws of the lion opened and closed.

The paws were thickly padded and his fingers fitted into glove-like straps inside them. By pulling on the straps, he could extend and withdraw the claws.

STALKING across the room, he growled gently. The inside of the head was set with bone plates to the shape of a megaphone and the sound rolled out deep and threatening.

He practised rearing the head and pouncing on his slippers. At first, he frightened himself when he stalked head-on at the mirror. But later it made him feel good. Really good and strong. Everyone was afraid of lions. No one was afraid of Mr. Whibley. He growled and roared a little louder. So loudly that Mrs. Johnson, his landlady, came up to his room. He tried to hide under the bed. She came in, saw the rear end of a lion protruding from under the counterpane, and shrieked.

"It's all right," he said. "It's only me."

He opened the slit and pushed his head through. She sat on the bed and patted her chest. "My goodness! You did give me a turn. I thought you were a real lion for a moment."

She looked at him reflectively.

"You know, you do look very lifelike. The vicar ought to see you in that skin. He's looking for someone to entertain at the Sunday

School party. I'll tell him about you tonight."

And so she did. Mr. Whibley protested that he wasn't an entertainer, but it was no use. He never could stand up to the vicar.

So, a fortnight later, while the Ladies' Choir sang the "Lion's Lament" from *The Wizard Of Oz*, Mr. Whibley, dressed in the skin, danced upon the stage of the church hall. He capered and tumbled and growled gently in time to the music. At the end of the dance, three choirboys, dressed as clowns, joined in. They proceeded to toss a huge, red balloon from one to the other while the lion pranced and skidded about the stage in vain and comic pursuit.

At the end of the act the children applauded loudly. Mr. Whibley felt quite dizzy, a little drunk with the applause. During the next few months he was always ready to appear at shows and parties in and around Bordington.

To improve his impersonation, he began to study lions. He saw every film in which they appeared, visited every circus within travelling distance, bought dozens of books about them, and filled album upon album with their pictures.

His study of the history and habits of lions developed from a hobby to an obsession. Most people suffered him as a bore. Only Tendrill regularly jibed and sneered at lions to bait him into excited defence of them.

Sitting on the park bench, Mr. Whibley frowned as he thought of Tendrill. Tendrill had scored over him again today. It was always the same. Whenever they exchanged words, Tendrill got the better of him. It was maddening.

The annoyance nagged at his mind most of the afternoon, until he had another surprise summons from Mr. Bodkin.

"I have been thinking," said Mr. Bodkin, "about this morning's fracas. The cause of it has given me an idea. I think we might reap some valuable publicity from the circus's visit. I don't consider it worth while upsetting a window, but I think we could have a large table display, mainly of fabrics, on the ground floor. I believe Miss Lawrence is very good at such things. I want it laid out in the fashion of a circus, the surface covered as a field, contrasting fabrics pleated to depict the big top, toys and dolls to represent performers."

He spent some ten minutes explaining his idea. "I've instructed the dresser and the other departments to give you all the help you require. I would like it on view by lunch-time tomorrow."

"Very good, sir," said Mr. Whibley. "We'll start immediately."

As he was going through the door, Mr. Bodkin spoke again. "You'll find that Toys have an excellent new consignment of miniature animals." He peered quizzically over his glasses, and chuckled to himself. "You will be a good chap and put in some others besides the lions, won't you?"

Mr. Whibley smiled dutifully.

THAT evening, Mr. Whibley was entertaining at a Sunday School party at the church hall. As usual, he did the "Lion's Lament" with the choir, and the balloon number with the clowns. The applause, he noticed, had been growing less lately. The children clapped politely, but without any wild enthusiasm.

During the interval he walked round the hall with his head showing through the slit in the skin.

The vicar's wife always insisted that he do this so that the children would know that he was not a real lion, and would not, therefore, have

Tendrill smiled with satisfaction at the wrecked display, at Mr. Whibley's accusing finger. "You rotten pig," cried Penny. "You did it on purpose!"

BHOWANI JUNCTION

by JOHN MASTERS

IN two weeks' time, JOHN BULL begins first world publication of a great novel. It is *Bhowani Junction*, one of the most important books we have ever serialized. Already, well before book publication, it has been selected by the influential Book of the Month Club in America; in Britain it is certain to win further honours.

The author is John Masters, a brilliant, forceful writer who, after only three books, has been hailed as a major novelist.

The scene is India. The time: 1946, with British rule coming to an end. Racial and political hatreds are at boiling point.

The story centres on the vitally important railway junction town of Bhowani, and on Victoria Jones, newly returned from serving with the British.

Victoria is twenty-eight, single, an engine-driver's daughter . . . and she has Indian blood in her veins. Within a few days of her return, she is caught up in a wave of violence that sweeps through the town. She is beset by an agonizing conflict of love and loyalties. In the harrowing days that follow, her problems—and India's—are dramatically fought out.

Bhowani Junction is a story of tremendous power and excitement. This great new novel, splendidly illustrated by William Little . . .

BEGINS IN JOHN BULL APRIL 10

nightmares. A boy, about eight, approached him. "You're a rotten lion," he said.

"I'm sorry," said Mr. Whibley. "I haven't been one very long."

"Lions don't dance while people sing songs," said the critic. "Lions don't let people push them around, and twist their tails, and make them look silly. Lions frighten people. They jump on them and tear them up and eat the pieces." He opened his mouth wide and snapped it shut. "They scrunch people's heads like biscuits. They claw everybody and cover them with blood."

And he went on his way.

MR. WHIBLEY pondered his words, and flexed himself experimentally inside the skin. He persuaded the vicar to let him appear again after the interval. This time he came on without benefit of music or clowns.

He crouched. He leapt. He growled malevolently and roared thunderously, stalking imaginary prey, and springing upon it with bloodcurdling snarls. He snapped his jaws, beat the air with his claws, menaced the audience, pounced upon a cushion and mauled it to a cloud of feathers. The children went mad with delight.

An immense exhilaration swept through Mr. Whibley as he sprang and thrashed about the stage, as though, in releasing the true nature of the lion, he was releasing his own personality from its fears and inhibitions.

The vicar's wife, and the mothers and fathers, quailed a little when he tore into the cushion, but reassured themselves with the thought that it must be all right if the children enjoyed it so much. And so they did, shivering in delicious horror, clawing the air and gnashing their teeth in sympathy, and calling for more and more.

Finally, the vicar, uncertain whether to be pleased at the success of his show, or alarmed at its effect on his flock, came on to say that it was time to go.

Next morning, Mr. Whibley arrived at the emporium half-an-hour before it opened to the customers. Penny had worked late the previous evening on the table display, and was just putting the finishing touches to it.

"My word!" said Mr. Whibley. "You *have* made a lovely job of it."

And so she had. The table was covered in green taffeta sprigged with red and white flowers; paths, laid out in yellow tie-silk, and fenced with black ribbon, led up to the big top, a dazzling construction of candy-striped materials, bright with all the colours of the rainbow. About the big top were groups of toys and dolls representing the various attractions of the circus. And raised up on a pyramid of ascending blocks, above the level of the other toys, were the lions. Penny pointed to them.

"There you are," she said. "I put your old lions up in front. Top of the bill."

"Thank you, Penny," said Mr. Whibley. "It was very thoughtful of you."

They were ridiculous little lions. Long-legged and woolly, with bright eyes and huge fluffy manes, they were made as cuddly toys for babies. But they looked gay and amusing, perched in performing attitudes on their blocks.

TENDRILL came up. He was carrying a pair of step ladders used for reaching the higher shelves behind the counters. He studied the display for some moments, and sniffed.

"What's this—a jumble sale for the toy department? And, Lord help us, just look at the you-know-whats! One, two, three. . . ." He leaned over to count the lions ostentatiously. ". . . nine, ten, eleven. It only wants you in your animal outfit to make up the round dozen of the noble beasts, Whibley."

Sniggering, he moved on. The ladder swung on his shoulder as he turned towards Linens and hit the pyramid of lions, knocking the topmost to the floor, and tumbling its two immediate supporters down to tangle among the ribbons and the tapes.

Mr. Whibley looked up from the wrecked display. The first thing he saw was Tendrill's smiling face. He pointed a shaking finger at it.

"You rotten pig!" blazed Penny. "You did it on purpose!"

"Oh! My goodness!" said Tendrill, in mock concern, "just look what I've done."

In spite of the warning he had received from Mr. Bodkin the day before, he could not resist the chance to score over Whibley. "I would be only too pleased to retrieve those wild animals for you, Miss Lawrence, were there not one among us better equipped to handle them."

He bowed derisively to Mr. Whibley. Penny moved forward to repair the damage.

Mr. Whibley spoke in a quiet, precise voice, without any sign of emotion. "Leave everything just as it is, Penny."

She stopped, and looked at him in perplexity. Tendrill's smile slipped slightly. This was a new Mr. Whibley.

Mr. Whibley stood quite still beside the display. He seemed to be crouching slightly, head pushed forward, shoulders hunched, muscles taut.

"Mr. Tendrill," he said coldly. "Please pick up that lion."

Tendrill began to snigger again, but the sound died in his throat as he looked into Mr. Whibley's unblinking eyes. He gave a false, pacifying chuckle. "Now, now," he said uneasily. "Steady, old man. It was only a joke. No need to lose your temper."

"Pick up that lion, and repair the damage you have done to Penny's display."

"Here," said Tendrill, alarmed now, "who do you think you're talking to? You can't——"

The breath hissed sharply through Mr. Whibley's teeth, the fingers of his left hand tensed upon the table, his shoulders moved fractionally forward, his feet shifted on the carpet—the small movements an animal makes as it finally sets itself to pounce.

"I asked you, Tendrill, to pick up that lion."

Tendrill jumped a little, and his face grew pale. After a moment, his features fell into a stiff grin. "All right," he said. "Anything for a quiet life, old man."

HE picked up the lion and, keeping a wary eye on his adversary, rebuilt the pyramid of lions, and straightened out the ribbons. "There you are, old man," he said, still trying to save face. "Anything else we can do for you?"

"Yes," replied Mr. Whibley. "Just bear in mind in future that lions don't let people push them around, or twist their tails, or make fools of them in public. And neither do I."

He took a short pace forward. Tendrill backed away hurriedly. Mr. Whibley laughed. Penny joined in. And slowly the laughter spread around the counters, rustling among Haberdashery, tinkling through Glassware, soughing through Woollens, and echoing among the cork forests of Floor-coverings. Mr. Tendrill took himself scurrying off to his haven—Linens.

Penny pushed her hair back from her eyes. She was beaming in triumph.

"That was wonderful, Mr. Whibley. You dominated him. That's what you did. Properly dominated him. You were absolutely—absolutely——" She groped for a word "—absolutely imperturbable. Just like Humphrey Bogart."

Mr. Whibley stopped her with a deprecating hand. He smiled. Indulgently. Dominantly. Imperturbably.

"Now, don't let's make too much of it, Penny. It was nothing at all, really. I will go and tell Mr. Bodkin that the display is ready."

And he strode away to the stairs, chest out, head high, bold as any lion. THE END

On his visits to leading fashion salons, Waterman ensures that designers hear about new woollen materials. He has never designed a dress himself

Mr. Wool is wrapped up in his work

by NORMAN PHILLIPS

His real name is Ewen Waterman. To bang the drum for his cause, he wears wool, talks wool. Once, a scientist persuaded him to eat it

ONE OF THE less-known crises of 1938 was the discovery that the historic woolsack on which the Lord Chancellor sits in the House of Lords was filled with horsehair instead of wool.

The government acted immediately. An envoy was sent to the International Wool Secretariat. With all possible speed, the woolsack was ripped open, emptied, and stuffed with the finest wool from Britain and the Dominions.

According to Ewen McIntyre Waterman, now the chairman of the International Wool Secretariat, the importance of this incident can scarcely be underestimated. Today, not only does the Lord Chancellor rest on an all-wool foundation, but his traditional seat is symbolic of the fact that wool products are Britain's second greatest dollar earner, and that raw wool is essential to the prosperity of Australia, New Zealand and South Africa.

Waterman, a short, dynamic Australian who started work as a jackaroo, or apprentice, on a sheep station, is now one of the world's best-dressed men. His five foot five inch figure is familiar in most of the places where wool is grown and processed.

As chairman of the secretariat—he is often called "Mr. Wool"—he spends his time roving the world, spreading the message of wool. Waterman not only talks wool—he wears it wherever he goes, and is so devoted to it that he has gone to the extreme of eating it.

Theoretically, wool can be made into a high protein food, and one of its ultimate uses is in the manufacture of soil fertilizers. A practical-joking scientist one day presented the London headquarters of the International Wool Secretariat with a sample of what he described as a breakfast food made from wool.

With several of the secretariat's officials, Waterman sampled the white powder. The taste left him unenthusiastic, and later he learned that the new food was a breakfast, not for humans, but for cows. The protein content is considered a valuable addition to cattle cake.

Waterman has a tolerant disdain for synthetic fibres and believes in the secretariat's battle cry: "There is NO substitute for wool." In his travels—he uses forty airlines to get about the world—he encounters this slogan in twenty-two different languages. He finds it in London tube trains, on Paris lamp posts, and on the kites that fly over Tokyo. It also finds its way frequently into "Mr. Wool's" conversation.

The secretariat of which he is chairman was set up in 1937 by the wool growers of Australia, New Zealand and South Africa; to finance the promotion of wool, growers in the three countries have arranged with their governments to collect a levy of a little more than a third of a penny a pound on every bale of wool sold. This money is spent by the secretariat on publicity, trade promotion, education, economics, science and technology.

Much of the scientific budget is devoted to

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"PICKED FRESH,
PACKED FRESH—EATEN FRESH
Birds Eye quick-freeze 'em
—that's the secret!"

Luscious Summer Fruits picked on a June day. Remember the taste? The clean, cool sweetness . . . the freshness? This is the quality that Birds Eye captures—garden freshness that's sealed in by quick-freezing.

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financing research in various universities and laboratories. The secretariat also acts as a clearing house for scientific information about wool.

While wool's importance has long been recognized, only in the last twenty-five years has science studied the fibre seriously. "The more we study it," says the secretariat's scientific director, Dr. Eric Carter, "the more complicated we find it to be."

One of the most dramatic advances made possible for the wool industry by science took place in Australia not far from the place where Waterman started his career. At sixteen he left home to work on a sheep station near a district known as the Ninety-Mile Desert. Not only was it impossible to breed sheep on any scale on this three thousand square mile tract, but the wool produced by the scanty flocks was inferior.

Now fifty-two, Waterman recently returned to the scene of his apprenticeship. In place of the scattered infertile breed of sheep, he found that over much of the area each acre now supported two or three producing ewes.

Aircraft Watch Sheep Flocks

The change resulted from a scientific investigation of sheep diet. It was found that the animals on the Ninety-Mile Desert lacked certain minerals such as copper, zinc, cobalt and molybdenum. These have been made available either in the form of salt licks or as top dressing for the soil, with startling results.

Top dressing for sheep grazing land is sometimes spread from the air, and New Zealand growers have a fleet of four hundred aircraft to do this work. On some Australian stations small planes are used to locate stray flocks, check on watering places and inspect fences.

On his eight thousand acre station at Minnipa, South Australia, a grower named C. B. Kargers not long ago lost a flock of three hundred sheep. A pilot flying in an Auster not only located the missing animals but, with the aid of an observer, rounded them up and drove them to the woolshed for shearing.

Waterman, who used to perform similar chores on horseback, cites these examples of enterprise to show how the industry is keeping up with the times. In fact, by using modern methods, the growers of Australia, New Zealand and South Africa have during the past seven years met the challenge of synthetic fibres by increasing their wool production by more than twenty-five per cent.

Although the major use of wool is in the manufacture of fabrics, scientists are finding more and varied employment for the commodity. British Railways found that the grease obtained after wool is washed is admirable for lubricating axles. More recently, the grease has been found to contain many rare organic chemicals. Cholesterol, once so rare that it was extracted from gallstones, is now obtained from wool grease. Cholesterol is the source of certain vitamins and hormones.

Among other uses of wool that Waterman can reel off are in the manufacture of cricket balls—thin layers of cork are bound together with fine worsted thread—and in the form of wool felt for organs and pianos. For the jewellery industry, wool felt is made as hard and rigid as wood. Buffing wheels for polishing jewels are cut from blocks of felted fine quality wool.

New Material Rivals Chiffon

In contrast to the hardness of the buffing wheels, fashion demands have resulted in the creation of lightweight, almost flimsy, fabrics. One of these cloths is made with the aid of seaweed, and Mrs. Waterman included some of this very fine material in her wardrobe on her last trip to Australia with her husband. The cloth was woven from a mixture of seaweed and wool, then washed in soap and water. The washing dissolves the seaweed, leaving an extremely light all-wool material that rivals chiffon.

One of the secretariat's functions is to bring such new woollen materials to the attention of the world's top fashion designers, and Waterman is a frequent visitor to the salons of Fath and Dior. Though he has never designed a dress in his life, Waterman is an honorary vice-president of the Incorporated Society of London Fashion Designers.

As a result of the secretariat's efforts, women are now wearing evening dresses made of wool. All-wool fashion shows are common occurrences, and wool has added a reputation for style to its traditional quality of warmth.

Although Waterman pays considerable attention to women's fashions, he is equally well informed on men's styles and sits on the Men's Fashion Council that sets sartorial standards for Savile Row. Waterman himself is a client of the exclusive tailor who also dresses Walt Disney, Lord Chief Justice Goddard and Sam Goldwyn.

Because his travels take him into all sorts of climates, Waterman has what is probably the finest collection of all-wool clothes. An impeccable, if conservative, dresser himself, he is occasionally dismayed by the fact that only half the adult population of Britain tries to be well dressed in everyday life. According to surveys made by the secretariat, in this respect Britain lags behind other equally prosperous countries.

Surveys also show Waterman that men are more important than women as wool consumers; that young men in this country have more trousers than coats, while older men tend to have more coats than trousers.

Buying habits as they affect wool are closely studied by the secretariat. One investigation showed that most Englishmen do not consult their wives when purchasing clothes, while most Frenchwomen accompany their husbands to buy their suits. On the basis of this discovery, the secretariat advised French clothing manufacturers to advertise men's wear in women's magazines.

Waterman has his eyes on a particularly promising market of the future—India and Pakistan, where consumption is now less than one pound for each person in a year. According to the secretariat's calculations, if this could be boosted to one pound per head, these two countries would absorb the entire wool clip of New Zealand.

At the secretariat's headquarters, Waterman (centre) names Australia's fifteen hundred types of wool at a glance. For his travels, he has a wardrobe of wool clothes to suit all climates

Wool Faces The Opposition

Like the secretariat, manufacturers of synthetic fibres are watching for new markets and Waterman is well aware of this. "It cannot be denied," he said recently, "that wool faces serious opposition from synthetics. However, no fibre has yet been produced that possesses all or even the majority of the characteristics of wool. There is *no* substitute for wool."

Not long ago Waterman was pleased to learn that in the Admiralty hangs a framed copy of the secretariat's rhyming poster—showing Nelson telling his barefooted sailors: "Remember the navy's golden rule: There is no substitute for wool!"

Some time after the poster was framed, a keen-eyed correspondent pointed out something that both the navy and the secretariat had overlooked—the artist had blinded Nelson in the wrong eye and deprived him of the wrong arm.

The artist's error was forgiven when the head of a Medical Research Council section wrote asking for a copy of the same poster to display in the council's offices. "Never," said the scientist, "have I seen such an excellent reproduction of the prehensile big toe." THE END

TO WIN A BRIDE

by JOHN APPLEBY

ILLUSTRATED BY GEORGE DITTON

She was the daughter of a wealthy man; he was just a poor shepherd. And he had yet to prove himself

IT ALL DEPENDED on how much Coloma told her father. Miquel, drinking wine outside the village café, waited placidly. He was not a patient young man, but he had enough wisdom not to fret over something which was now out of his control.

The four older men who smoked together at the next table ignored him. In the past they had teased him and nudged his ribs, but now they knew the matter was serious and not to be joked about.

Miquel gazed beyond the huddle of houses to the jagged rim of the Pyrenees, their summer snow gilded by the sun. They were the challenge he had not yet met; and that too depended on the decision Coloma's father would make.

A scrawny black cat padded cautiously out of the café, blinked at the four men, and circled clear of their boots. Miquel stooped and tickled its bony flanks. The gesture was not made to bring him luck; it was just that, unlike most of his peasant countrymen, he was very fond of animals.

He did not feel himself in need of luck. Miquel

Here, in the open, it was too dangerous to show their feeling for each other. When Miquel suddenly caught her hand, she was taken by surprise

felt no qualms about his worthiness. True, he was poor, and Coloma, the only child of Entignac, was a *pubilla*, an heiress who would inherit three farms and seven pastures, besides those other activities which made Entignac a man of consequence in Andorra. But Miquel was strong, the best shepherd in the valley, and —most important of all—he was an Andorran whose family threaded back beyond written record.

He nodded in friendly fashion to the mountains, as though to an antagonist. Beyond them to the right lay France, and to the left, Spain.

Draining his glass, Miquel decided that whatever conclusion Entignac came to, it was time he met the challenge and proved his manhood. But he hoped that it would be with Entignac. . . .

The times were changing, and the market for the tobacco that grew so lushly in the valleys had slumped. It was bulky, and the cost could be high to those who smuggled it over the mountains.

The mules were not to blame. They were trained as carefully as circus horses and plodded over the tracks without guidance. In this way interception by the frontier guards brought no danger to the man who sent them, nor to those waiting to receive them. But the tracks they could negotiate were limited in number and were becoming known. Miquel knew that Entignac had lost the last three loads of tobacco, and his mules were now serving with the French Army.

But a man on foot could climb where a mule could not, and he had his wits to help him. The load he carried did not exceed forty pounds, but its variety was great. In this trade Andorra was merely a staging post along the well-greased road snaking north from Tangier: north through Spain, over the Pyrenees, and fanning out into Continental Europe.

MIQUEL was watching the door at the end of the dusty street without looking at it, and now it opened. Coloma came out and strolled past the café to the village shop. After a moment Miquel finished his drink and followed. Side by side they examined the rows of bottles, yellow cheese and lengths of dark bread.

She said softly, "He will see you."

"How much did you tell him?"

"That you wish to be with him when he next goes over the mountains."

"No more?"

"He understood the rest."

Her hand hung beside her broad apron and he took it and gave a squeeze. She pulled away, drawing her breath sharply. Miquel himself was shocked at his impetuosity. A man and a girl did not even talk alone in public until the family understanding was reached.

Coloma said: "You have been away for ten days. You did not come back even for the Dance of the Bear."

"My sheep needed me."

She pouted. "Always this tenderness for animals! Even the women laugh at you for it. You care for them more than you do for me." It was true that his feeling for animals had attracted amused comment.

"Love me and trust me."

She said with soft urgency: "Speak to my father carefully, Miquel. He is not an easy man."

He grinned and she disappeared into the shop. Squaring his shoulders, he turned back down the street, without glancing at the four men.

They did not glance at him either, but he knew they wished him well.

A servant woman admitted him to a dark hall and a moment later he was shown into the room where Entignac sat, his hands splayed on the table before him. He was a slight, wiry man of fifty with deep eyes and a tight mouth.

Miquel knew he would not speak first, and

The dog was well trained. Without a sound, it sprang at him. Miquel felt a quick stab of fear

said directly, "I am nineteen years old and it is time I went over the mountains."

Entignac grunted. "So you choose me to guide you. It is an honour."

"I come to you because you are the best. It must be so; you are the most prosperous."

A daring thing to say to a man like this, and for a moment he quailed.

Entignac smiled thinly. "Because I am successful you tell yourself it is easy. But this summer the French patrols have increased, and their dogs, too."

Miquel said boldly, "I am not afraid of their dogs."

"Nor of their prisons? If you knew those French prisons. . . ."

"You don't know them either."

Again the right thing to say. Behind the dour mask he could see that Entignac was pleased.

"Coloma tells me you were not at the Dance of the Bear," Entignac said.

"Some of the sheep were sick. I am fond of animals."

The deep-set eyes looked at him shrewdly. "Or you were learning more about the mountain paths."

"I have known them since childhood, every stone and gully. But crossing the frontier is a different matter, and that is why I come to you."

ENTIGNAC stroked his chin. "Yet you are fond of dancing. At the earlier *fiesta*, I think, you gave Coloma a flower—a gentian, wasn't it? And she gave you one in return?"

Miquel said stoutly: "That is permitted. It merely shows where the heart is."

Entignac nodded. A dance was the only occasion when a youth could speak to a girl with any freedom. If the exchange of flowers went well, he could then approach the girl's father, circumspectly and with dignity.

The older man got up. "We can discuss flowers later. Today I have business on my mind. There are two loads to be delivered and I anticipated two journeys. Since you come here by this happy—chance——"

Miquel said gravely, "A happy chance."

"My legs are still good, but one journey is better than two. I leave at seven o'clock and I travel fast."

Miquel, his heart singing, said, "I shall be ready."

* * *

Lashing on his rope sandals, Miquel gave no thought to the commercial aspect of the venture. A man could live all his life in Andorra without going over the mountains; but he who went grew in stature and esteem. To a poor shepherd, aspiring to a *pubilla*, those were precious things. And when you were nineteen years old, it was fun, too.

Coloma let him into the house, eyes bright and lips tremulous. He smiled, hoping for a moment alone with her. It would be sweet to hear her implore him to take care and to reassure her with manly words. But they were only able to shake hands.

Entignac hitched a haversack on his shoulder, and pointed to another one.

"You have brought safety gear?"

Miquel patted his chest and took up the haversack. It was not large but it weighed heavily: watches, he guessed, or cameras. It was not his business to know or ask.

Entignac looked him up and down briefly. Each man wore a dark windcheater, zipped to the neck, and dark trousers; clothes for swift and unobtrusive movement. At his waist each had a knife in a leather sheath.

At the door Entignac said, "We shall remain at the rendezvous tomorrow and leave at dusk."

The sun had already left the valley floor. As they passed the café, Miquel felt curious glances following him and was proud. His presence as a partner in the mission, however junior, told them that he was halfway to acceptance as Coloma's suitor. His resolution hardened. If he failed the test he would lose not only Coloma but all claim to esteem, which was even more terrible.

Without turning, he knew she was at the door. He walked on stolidly. They were men on men's business and womanish farewells were out of place.

WITH the short quick steps of mountain men, they set off up the valley. The dirt road faded into a narrow track which rose steeply. On one side reared neat rows of husbandry, ending abruptly in shale and outcrops of rock. On the other the land fell away to the rushing river which foamed green and white, a perpetual sound that not even the snows of winter could hush.

If they followed the river valley to the watershed they would climb only a thousand feet, bringing them six thousand feet above sea level. But, of course, they would not do that. Somewhere along the way they would swing to the right and begin real climbing. Miquel, who had given hard thought to the matter, was confident he knew where that point would be.

The serried fields were behind them and the valley became a gorge of tumbled boulders, but because of the pace at which they mounted they had not yet lost the sun. In another hour they were among a wilderness of crags, and Entignac called a halt.

"Smoke. There won't be another chance."

By the time they threw their cigarettes away, their sweat was cold and Miquel was glad to move. Dusk became dark and the moon came up; a moon in the first quarter, light enough to help their eyes but offering concealment, too.

The river was far below them now, its noise no louder than their steady breathing. Entignac, a black humped figure, pointed to the right. Without speaking, he began to climb.

The slope was arduous but no danger to a fit man. They used their hands, hauling at the

Continued on page 30

Britain's super-dustman traps poison in the air

by REX GRIZELL

"You can't make anything without dust," says Leslie Cox. With fans and filters he guards men and machines from a choking enemy—and cocoa that explodes like dynamite

A FEW MONTHS AGO, a large firm of shoe manufacturers in a Midland town were surprised to receive a warning from the local health authority. Dust from one of their machine shops was escaping into a nearby butcher's shop. The butcher had complained that this was contaminating his meat.

To get themselves out of trouble, the shoe manufacturers called in a dust-control engineer, Leslie Machell Cox, who soon supplied equipment that solved the problem.

"If all industrialists realized the dangers of dust in factory air, such a situation would never arise," says Cox. Dust is the enemy of industry in two ways. It can destroy suddenly by explosion and fire, and wherever it is uncontrolled it does destroy slowly and inevitably both men and machines. More than 150 types of industrial dust will explode if a spark or flame reaches a dust cloud of the right concentration.

In a brewery recently, malt was being ground when a small piece of stone in the malt struck a spark from a moving part of the mill and ignited a dust cloud in the plant. A man was so badly hurt by a resulting explosion that he died a few days later.

Early this year a Birmingham plastics factory was rocked by an explosion. Workers were blown off their feet, cooling fans fell from the roof, doors were wrenched from their hinges and glass flew from the shattered roof. Eleven workers were taken to hospital with burns. The explosion had been caused by a spark igniting a cloud of plastic dust.

About twenty-five dust explosions occur every year in British industry, with frequent fatalities. Less spectacular but more deadly are the dust diseases of the lung which kill more than 1,300 industrial workers annually. "These diseases take from five to twenty-five years to kill," says Cox. "For every workman who dies, several are incapacitated, and there are many more whose efficiency decreases month by month."

And on top of all this, free dust gets into the working parts of machines, halves the lives of bearings, and increases maintenance costs.

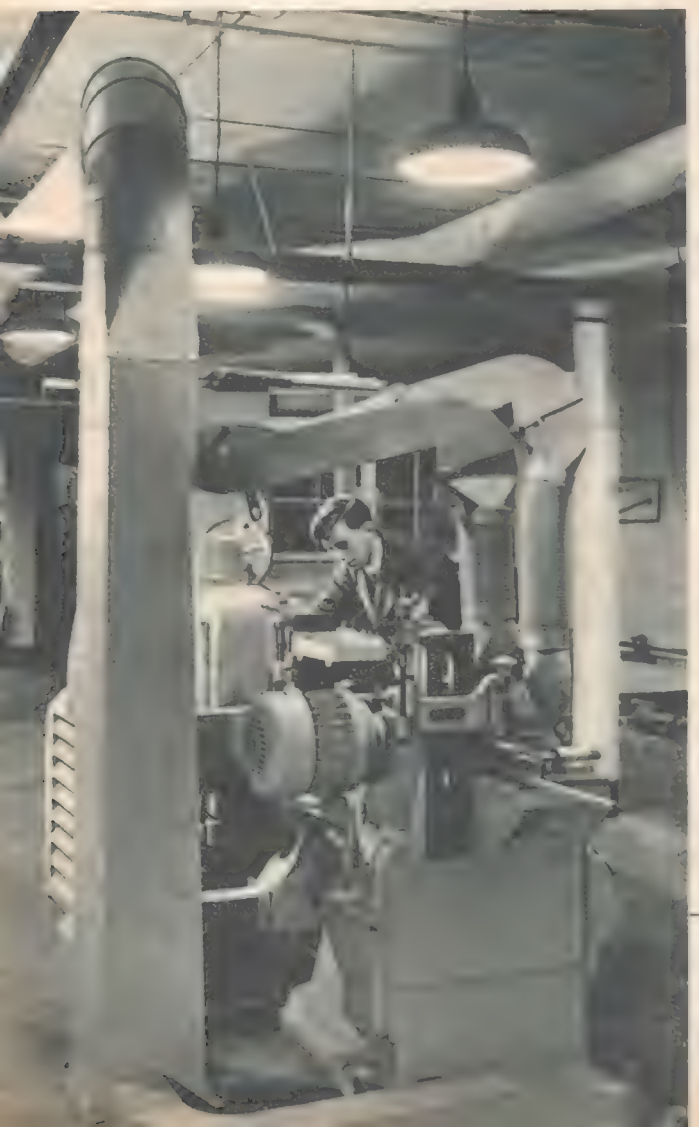
Cox, a lean six foot three inch Midlander with brown wavy hair and shrewd eyes, is chief sales engineer for Dallow and Lambert, a Leicester firm which specializes in making dust extraction plant. "You can't make anything without making dust," Cox says. "Our job is to collect it at its source." The size of the job varies from the collection of dust created when ordinary needles are polished, to gathering waste from huge wood-working machines which create enough dust to bury themselves in half an hour.

Rushed To Help Export Firm

Cox has specified dust control equipment for the Sheikh of Kuwait's new factories, for uranium mines in the Belgian Congo, and for a factory where Falkland Islanders make all their own furniture. He never knows what sort of problem he will be faced with next.

Late one Friday afternoon a large firm of jet engine manufacturers telephoned to say they were in difficulties. They had an urgent export order which called for a change in the sequence of machining operations. Alterations in the positions of the machines would leave several grinding machines without dust extraction, and the workers refused to operate them until it was fitted. They would complete the change-over by the following Tuesday. Could Cox help them? He was able to get suitable dust control plant fitted in time for the restart.

The basic method of control remains the same whatever the job. A fan sucks air away from the operator and into a duct. The dust produced is carried with the air-stream to a close-weave cotton filter which allows only the cleaned air through. The filters can be mechanically shaken and the trapped dust falls into a sealed tray which is emptied regularly. For coarser dust mixed with larger particles of waste, such as wood chips, cyclone separators are used. These are shaped like enormous ice-cream cones and may be as high as twenty feet. The larger particles fall naturally to the bottom. Smaller ones are carried down by air currents.



A machine fitted with dust-removing ducts. As he inspected equipment on a high-speed cutter, one of Cox's men lost the seat of his trousers

Huge Filter Was Blown Away

The size of the larger cyclones makes them difficult to handle. Cox remembers one job in Ireland when a cyclone had to be fitted near the outside wall of a factory situated on a cliff. He decided it would have to be brought round under the cliff on a barge and then hoisted up. Just as it was lifted off the deck a strong gust of wind blew it into the sea. One man was knocked overboard. He was rescued—but the cyclone was never recovered.

Dust is defined as any kind of solid material in a fine state of subdivision. The amount present in the air varies enormously. On a clear day by the sea there may be no dust at all in a cubic centimetre of air, while the same amount taken near a grinding machine in a factory may contain twelve thousand particles. Dust size is measured in microns, of which there are 25,400 to the inch. Almost all dust which enters and damages the lungs is less than three microns in size, and is invisible except in a strong beam of light. Familiar dusts which are readily exploded are flour, malt, sugar, cork, and cocoa, but the most dangerous are those produced in the grinding of magnesium and aluminium alloys.

During the war, when some of these alloys were first used, many workers were killed and injured by explosion, and production was seriously affected. Cox's firm now make a special plant which immerses the dust in water. If the water level or the air flow falls below a safety point, the grinding machine stops and cannot be restarted until correct conditions are restored.

"Because of the constantly changing conditions even in one given factory, nobody can assess exactly the millions of pounds that dust costs in lost production every year," says Cox.

Not every dust which is inhaled over long periods is harmful. The chest X-ray of a welder or other workman who has breathed iron oxide fumes for some time will look like that of an advanced consumptive, though the man may be perfectly healthy. The most dangerous dusts are those containing a high percentage of silica, such as those formed in the use of sandstone grinding wheels, or in the drilling of quartz-bearing rock.

"Thirty years ago," says Cox, "neither workers nor doctors knew much of the dangers of dust inhalation." Knife-grinders in Sheffield rarely reached the age of forty. Men engaged in

Leslie Cox (centre) inspects a cyclone being built at his firm's factory. Shaped like a huge ice-cream cone, it traps large waste particles

sand-blasting, in which a stream of abrasive material is blown at high pressure on to castings, usually died within ten years of starting the job. In those days fine sand (silica) was used as an abrasive, but this is now illegal.

In his battle to make industry more dust-conscious, Cox travels widely, writes articles in the industrial press, delivers lectures, and keeps close contact with government research.

He describes the erection of large extraction plants as an awkward and unpleasant job rather than a dangerous one. Some of the outside work may be on scaffolding up to a hundred feet high; workmen sometimes have to wear respirators.

Recently, one of his men was inspecting extraction equipment fitted to a modern woodworking machine, the cutting blades of which revolved so fast that there appeared to be no movement at all. The man didn't realize it was switched on, and in making an adjustment he backed too close. The seat of his trousers was neatly removed by the cutters and whipped away up the suction intake. He himself, Cox says, suffered a flesh wound, and took his meals standing up for a few days.

Cox remembers an occasion in his early days when he had to measure an installation at a brewery. The directors first persuaded him to sample the firm's products. Back on the job, he decided the cyclone should be placed about twenty feet from the end wall of the brewery and should have a two-foot diameter duct leading to it. When the erectors came to fit up the cyclone, they found there was a telegraph pole directly in the way of the pipe. "I must have seen two," Cox says, "with plenty of space between them."

He recalls that on a Friday in June, 1942, his firm completed its largest installation—a series of fourteen cyclones at the Ford Motor Works at Manchester. The job had taken six months. When it was all over, the erectors went home. The same night there was an air raid on Manchester, the factory was hit and the whole job destroyed. That meant another six months' work.

Gold And Silver In The Dust

Collection of dust does more than safeguard the health of operators and the efficiency of machines. Many of the dusts are valuable. According to Cox, jewellery manufacturers find it profitable to burn their filters every year. The gold and silver recovered is worth pounds, and a new filter can be fitted for a few shillings.

A very high duty is paid on imported tobacco and the manufacturers may claim compensation for anything else found mixed with the leaf. Dust extracted may be found to include sand and soil of the countries where the tobacco was grown.

Cox once received an order for a cyclone from an Argentine meat extract factory. Six months later he received a letter complaining that beef dust was escaping from the cyclone. To emphasize the point, the firm said a chemist had reported that "a small bullock was jumping out of the top of the cyclone every day." Cox replied that if he had had more details when the order was given, he would have recommended a filter. And a filter was duly sent.

"We are often called back to factories soon after completing an installation," says Cox. "Workers are amused by the novelty, and put things near the suction inlet to test its power. Workmen's caps, drink cartons, sandwich wrappers, a brassière, and the top of a vacuum flask have been found in the machine." Cox once received an S O S from the woodworking department of a large toy factory. The suction plant had failed. The maintenance engineer was baffled for a time but eventually found a large wooden toy engine lodged in the overhead ducting.

On another occasion Cox himself was discussing an extension to a system with a director of the firm concerned, when a noise like the clatter of machine-guns burst on the room. A workman had left his lunch too near a suction intake, and an empty condensed milk tin had been sucked up and was being hurled about by the blades of the fan, the noise being enormously magnified by the hollow ducting.

Men Used Ducts As Ash Trays

A firm once complained to Cox about repeated fires in the ducting of equipment in a polishing shop. The firm insisted there was a "No Smoking" rule in force, and that the equipment was defective. When Cox called to investigate, he saw the door of the polishing shop ajar and went in unannounced. He noticed two or three men throw cigarette ends guiltily into the suction intake. When the firm again insisted there was no smoking, Cox produced more than twenty cigarette ends from the dust trays. Filters are now made flame resistant, but Cox always stresses the danger of throwing a lighted cigarette into a duct.

In his crusade against dust, Cox corresponds with governments and business firms in all parts of the world. Sometimes his post contains strange requests. Once he was asked to supply a machine for picking up orange peel and litter in municipal parks. From Athens came a request for dust-collecting machines for street-sweepers. Cox answered both with polite notes—saying it couldn't be done. THE END

As the tribesmen came riding up the gorge towards us, Ed raised his automatic a

THE STRANGE LAND

by HAMMOND INNES

ILLUSTRATED BY LAURENT

There were hundreds of them, and five of us. If it came to a fight, we wouldn't stand a chance

AT KASBAH FOUM, on the edge of the Moroccan desert, there was an explosive situation. The Berber tribesmen, short of food and work, were being goaded to open rebellion. Their fanatical young nationalist leader, Ali d'Es-Skhira, was whipping up their fury against "foreigners" who, he said, were trying to take part of their land away from them.

I was one of those "foreigners." I am Philip Latham, an English missionary. I had come here with Jan Kavan, a Czech refugee scientist who had a legal claim to some silver deposits said to lie below Kasbah Foum. I had hired Kavan originally as a doctor for my mission. But the mission had been destroyed in a landslide.

Kavan had been given the rights to Kasbah Foum during the war by a dying Foreign Legion officer. They came originally from Caid Hassan, the local Berber chieftain.

Accompanying us was Julie Corrigan; she and her brother had been staying at the mission. He had been killed. . . . I felt responsible for her—and for Kavan, too. I had smuggled the man into Morocco from Tangier. It was a mad thing to do, but he had been desperate, and there was a curious sincerity about him that wore down my scruples. He had been passing himself off as a man called Wade.

So here we were at Kasbah Foum, trying to get old Caid Hassan to recognize Jan Kavan's claim—and fighting a couple of rearguard actions. One of them was against Ali, the Caid's own son, who wanted the silver for his revolutionary funds. The other "enemy" was an American called Ed White, who was already working the site. For the time being we were co-operating.

The old Caid was hospitable but enfeebled. He seemed anxious to help us, but he was hardly a match for his venomous son—who insisted on being present while we parleyed.

As we left, Kavan was silent and discouraged. He was a wanted man. It could not be long before the police caught up with him. . . .

It was pitch black outside the Caid's *kasbah*. Moha, the guide who had led us there, had gone. We groped our way slowly. Suddenly we were startled by a scream, a gunshot, running men. Huddled on the ground was a body.

PART 5

The Silver Mine

I SAW at a glance that the body lying on the *piste* was alive. The man was breathing heavily, his chest heaving the air out in great gasping sobs. But there was blood on the sand.

"I didn't hit him," Ed White panted. "I swear I didn't. I fired into the air."

"We'll soon find out," I said, and turned the man over. It was our missing guide—Moha.

Jan thrust me aside, tearing Moha's *djellaba* apart to expose the torn flesh of the man's back. He examined the wound quickly and then nodded and said: "He's all right. Just a flesh wound." He sat back on his haunches, staring at the inert body. "Why did they attack him?" he asked.

"I don't know," I said. "We'd better get him up to the camp."

As we lifted him up, I saw he had something

took aim. I grabbed at his arm. "For God's sake," I pleaded. "Don't shoot!"

tightly clutched in his right hand. It was a roll of paper. I prised his fingers loose and we carried him to the larger of the two tents where we laid him on one of the camp beds. Julie joined us there, carrying a bowl of water and some bandages. While she set to work to bathe the man's wounds, I took the crumpled paper over to the pressure lamp. It was written in Arabic, the writing thin and shaky, but recognizably the same as the writing on the deeds of Kasbah Foum. It was signed "Caid El-Hassan d'Es-Skhira."

I touched Jan on the shoulder as he bent over the knife wound in Moha's body. "Here's the answer to your question," I said. "He was attacked because he was bringing you this. It's confirmation of your title to Kasbah Foum. . . ."

I studied it more closely. "The Caid doesn't mention your name anywhere. He simply refers to you as 'the bearer of the deeds'!"

He gazed at me. "But I don't understand, Philip. What do you think made him do it in such a hurry?"

The man on the camp bed groaned and moved. I turned and saw that he had recovered consciousness. "Maybe that's your answer," I said. "The Caid knows his son only too well."

Later, after we had patched up the old man as best we could and had escorted him to his house, we had a meal and turned in. I insisted on Jan's moving into Ed White's tent. The American was the only one of us who had a gun. I made Julie lock herself in her own compartment and I settled down in the passenger seat, within easy reach of the controls.

It was an uncomfortable bed and I slept little. Nothing happened during the night and when dawn broke and showed me the empty expanse of desert leading down to the *palmerie*, I transferred to the bunk and slept till midday.

By the time I had washed and shaved and had some coffee, Jan and Ed White were coming out of the gorge for their midday meal. They were talking together and laughing as though they had known each other all their lives.

"Philip!" Jan's voice reached me on the light breeze. "We've found it. We've found it. We've found the entrance to the mine."

Now, they were running, and I ran, too, to meet them, Julie behind them. They were full of the technical details and despite the disquiet in my mind, it was impossible not to be infected with their excitement.

Julie had laid the table out in the open under the fly of the big tent. "I've been ransacking your stores," she said to Ed. "I opened up some of your tinned turkey. I hope you don't mind."

"Why should I?" Ed laughed.

Julie smiled. "You boys are so interested in what you're doing, I'll bet you haven't any idea why I'm serving a turkey dinner."

We stared at her. It was Ed who suddenly laughed out loud. "I got it," he cried. "I got it!" And he thumped the table with his fist. "By God, it's Christmas Day!" And he jumped to his feet and dived into his tent, coming out with a bottle of cognac. "Merry Christmas!"

Julie put her hand on Jan's shoulder. "And tomorrow will be the twenty-sixth. Your wife will be in Ouarzazate tomorrow. Remember?"

Kavan's wife, Karen, had escaped from Prague and come to Morocco. She had a job with an American family.

Jan nodded. "Tomorrow."

We drank a toast and then we ate. About halfway through the meal Jan stopped eating and pointed toward Foum-Skhira. I turned in my seat and saw a French truck driving fast along the *piste* towards us. The truck drew up by the tent in a cloud of sand. The bearded orderly from the Post was at the wheel. "*Bureau,*" he shouted, pointing urgently towards Foum-Skhira. "*Bureau. Vite, vite, monsieur!*"

I got up to question him, but the truck was already moving off.

"Well," I said, and turned to the others, shrugging. Christmas Day or not, this sounded like trouble.

We finished our meal, and went out to the bus, leaving Ed behind.

There was a Citroën parked outside the Bureau as we drew up. I examined it curiously. It was not Capitaine Legard's car. The orderly from the jeep was waiting for us, his cloak flapping in the wind. He beckoned to us.

Julie went in first and then Jan. They both stopped and there was a look of shocked surprise on Jan's face. Then I, too, was inside the office and I knew that it was trouble indeed.

It wasn't Legard sitting at the desk in there. It was Bilvidic, the official of the Sûreté who had questioned Jan earlier, and to whom we had lied.

He rose as he saw Julie. "Mademoiselle Corrigan?" he asked.

Julie nodded.

Bilvidic regarded Jan for a moment before motioning her to a seat. "Tell me, Mademoiselle Corrigan, have you always known this gentleman as Dr. Kavan?"

"Yes."

"And you agreed to drive him down here to——"

"Miss Corrigan has nothing to do with this business," I said quickly. "If you want to ask questions, please put them to me."

"Very well then, Monsieur." Bilvidic's grey eyes stared at me frostily over their little

Continued on page 32

VIC OLIVER concludes the story of his life of GAY ADVENTURE

I form my own orchestra—and raise a storm

"This was my life's ambition," says Vic, "and it brought me a barrage of abuse. I was a poseur. I was going highbrow on my old friends. Why didn't I stick to my jokes?"

WHEN, IN 1941, I moved from the small cottage in the grounds of Chartwell, the home of Mr. Winston Churchill, my father-in-law, Brendan Bracken arranged for me to rent another cottage on James de Rothschild's estate in Buckinghamshire.

I became extremely friendly with Mr. de Rothschild and his wife. Their house lay two miles across the park—a pleasant distance for an afternoon's ride—and I often accepted their invitations to tea. One day, de Rothschild asked me if I would like to look over his stud.

I had always been fond of horses. I had been a cavalry officer in the Austrian Army in the first World War, and I had driven trotting horses at the Vienna race-track. With my father, I had even bought a stud of my own shortly before Austria was defeated. I accepted de Rothschild's invitation with enthusiasm.

He had a fine string of yearlings and, in my innocence, I said: "I'd like to own a horse like that." Next day, I was astounded when the stud groom arrived at my cottage leading a racehorse. "With Mr. de Rothschild's compliments," he said.

Sprinkled Champagne On Horse

At first I tried to persuade de Rothschild that I had not meant my remark seriously.

"Take it, anyway," he insisted. "It's not likely to win many races." Fortunately, we had eight stables, only three of which were occupied by riding horses. After making the horse comfortable, we cracked a bottle of champagne, sprinkled a little of it over his head and named him Richard the First.

Richard was getting on for two years of age, and, to justify the time and money we soon spent in training him, I decided he must race. Fortunately, we had in the stables a boy called Danny Murray, who had been a professional jockey in Ireland and was still able to make the weight. We entered Richard for a race at Windsor, with Danny to ride him.

I shall never forget that first race. It was a fine, sunny day, and my racing colours of black and yellow showed up just as I had imagined against the blue sky and the green of the trees. As the starting-gate went up, I felt a tremendous thrill of anticipation. It was the first time I had raced a horse of my own.

My raptures were short-lived. Richard the First came in last.

Richard's failure as a racehorse made me all the more determined to succeed in racing. I went racing mad. For hours every day I studied riding, breeding, training. Armed with my knowledge and a cheque-book, I started going to the Newmarket sales. I shall never forget

"As I remained erect and dignified," writes Vic of his first concert, "I sensed a mood of disappointment. But it soon evaporated"

my first visit. With perfect confidence in my judgment I successfully bid for a horse called Indian Tea and a beautiful two-year-old filly, as yet unnamed.

The day after they arrived at my cottage, I watched proudly as the stud-girl led them out for exercise. Indian Tea was calm, but the filly had no sooner left her box than she slipped her reins and galloped out of the paddock. After tearing up the lawn tennis court, she pranced about the kitchen garden, making a hash of the carrots and turnips. Finally, we caught her and sent for a vet.

The vet merely looked at her eyes. "She's mad," he pronounced. "I'll have to shoot her." The shot echoed through the stables. My first attempt at buying a horse had cost me £60. In those days, it was a fairish price.

Again, far from discouraging me, misfortune spurred me to yet greater efforts. I now hired a full-time trainer called Bill Larkin, and when he said the land attached to the cottage was too small to exercise a horse properly, I rented a second house in Eastbury, Berkshire. Bill moved in with his wife. I merely went down at weekends to watch the gallops.

Soon, I had a stable of ten horses which I constantly raced. Though they occasionally got places when only three or four horses were running, I never won a valuable race. The turf was proving an extremely expensive hobby.

The following year, I had advanced in racing wisdom and bought a horse called Treasury from Sir Malcolm MacAlpine. Treasury was a sound investment. Not only did he win two races, but when his racing days were over I had the good fortune to sell him for £2,500 to an American stud. This represented a very considerable profit on the price I paid for him.

Although I was now approaching the point where I was no longer losing money, I found that my house at Eastbury was too inaccessible for weekend visits. Eventually, I decided to give it up and move my horses to George Colling's stables at Newmarket. Meanwhile, I still attended the sales in the hope of picking up a bargain.

Bought A Winner For £1,000

In December, 1944, I told Colling that I was looking for a promising two-year-old. He examined those up for auction and advised me to bid for a dark brown horse around fifteen hands high. When the auctioneer knocked him down to me at £1,000, I was convinced that I had made a good buy.

Throughout the winter, Colling gave the horse light work. When spring came, training began in earnest. Early in March, the horse ran his first full-length trial. Colling was cautiously optimistic. "Today," he wrote, "that horse went like a machine." Delighted, I went around telling my friends I had a Derby winner.

A few weeks later, we entered the horse for his first race. It was a three-year-old handicap and he ran fourth. We were not disappointed. It was the sort of result we had expected in his first race. When he entered his next race, we were mildly hopeful. He won easily. Afterwards, he never seemed to stop winning. We ran him every third week. He won thirteen firsts, twenty-two places and set up the course record at Liverpool for the two miles. In one season, he made between £7,000 and £8,000 in prize-money. When I appeared on the halls, audiences called out his name. It was, of course, Voluntary.

Nowadays, I have only one horse—Shelley Ann, named after my daughter. I rarely see my

With other principals of the *Humpty Dumpty* cast, Vic (second from right) was presented to the late Queen Mary, the Duchess of Kent, and her two children at the London Casino in 1948. It was his first pantomime: "I was extremely unhappy," he says, "then I began to get the hang of it"

orse race, and last year, when my trainer rang e to say that she had won a race at Chepstow, was only mildly interested. I suppose my active terest in the sport really declined because of ne tremendous number of activities I have ursued, both in the late war years and since 945. Besides troop concerts and a number of lms, I had leading parts in West End musicals ke *Black Velvet, Get A Load Of This, Night nd The Music* and *Starlight Roof*, and con- nued broadcasting, first in *Hi Gang!*, then in *ebe, Ben And Vic*, and later in *Yankee Doodle o, Oliver Twists* and *Oliver Again*.

Ever since I had first entered show business as jazz pianist in America, however, I had longed o do the work for which I had been trained at ne Vienna Conservatory of Music before the rst World War: I longed to conduct my own rchestra.

I also wished to revive a talent for which I ad been well paid in America—that of master f ceremonies. In the autumn of 1944, there- ore, I suggested to the directors of the B.B.C. ne formula for a programme in which I could ombine these two activities. Each broadcast ould consist of a series of performances taken rom different kinds of show business—one from nusic hall, one from opera, one from the concert all, one from the circus. I should conduct the rchestra which played for them.

The reaction of the directors was as I had xpected. "How can a programme succeed when s appeal is split between so many interests?" hey asked. However, I persisted, and because hey realized I would not want to jeopardize my eputation in a second-rate programme, they suggested I work out the formula more fully with Pat Hilliard, then Head of Variety. Henry Reed was appointed producer, and I engaged George Tarleton to gather an orchestra for me. Under the title *Vic Oliver Introduces*, the programme went on the air.

I must admit that the first few programmes were below standard, but I had full confidence in my idea and, after eight or nine weeks, our contract was extended for twenty-six weeks. At the end of this time, however, I decided that we needed a stronger orchestra, and engaged Victor Allchurch as my personal orchestral manager.

Collected Leading Musicians

Victor canvassed leading members of most of the well-known orchestras and asked them if they would like to play in what we came to call the British Concert Orchestra, when they were available. He soon gathered a strong team of musicians. Both he and Andrew Brown, the original leader of the B.C.O., are still with me.

The formation of the B.C.O. not only improved tremendously the standard of playing in *Vic Oliver Introduces*, it also caught the attention of that go-getting young impresario, Harold Fielding.

"Why not conduct the British Concert Orchestra at public concerts?" Fielding suggested.

It was what I had always wanted, and when he proposed a try-out at the Empire Theatre, Kingston-upon-Thames, with a concert at the Albert Hall a few days later, I readily agreed.

When the arrangement was publicly announced, I was subjected to a barrage of abuse. I was going highbrow. I was a poseur. The cobbler should stick to his last and the music hall comedian to his broad jokes. A man stopped me outside the stage door of the Shepherds Bush Empire. "You're not the Old Vic any more," he said. "You're going highbrow on your old friends." An acquaintance stopped me in the street and asked superciliously: "Is it an orchestra you're going to conduct—or a bus?"

Even those members of the B.C.O. who were ignorant of my previous experience of conducting tried at first to "take the mickey." I well remember that when we came to a passage marked *morendo* (meaning "dying out") in rehearsal a violinist asked innocently: "Mr. Oliver, do you want this playing full *morendo* or just slightly *morendo?*" I shook my head. "You're coming the wrong man," I said.

Scorn Stopped The Trouble

Later, a 'cellist failed to play a passage for which his part had been scored. "You didn't play that very loudly," I remarked.

He spoke up brightly. "As a matter of fact," he said, "I didn't play it at all."

"That," I said with withering scorn, "is precisely what I meant." Afterwards, I had no more trouble.

I was terribly nervous about the success of my first concert at Kingston. But when I found that every seat had been sold I was tremendously relieved. The applause when I stepped on the rostrum was perhaps the loudest I have ever received. But I knew at once that this was not the applause of music-lovers. It was the

Vic and his wife, Natalie, with Shelley Ann. "When I came in one day," says Vic, "they were listening to one of my recorded shows. Shelley insisted that the real me was in the radio"

applause of people who accepted me only as a comedian. They expected me at any moment to break my baton, jump off the platform and turn a somersault.

As I remained erect and dignified on the rostrum, I sensed at first a mood of disappointment. When the programme started, however, the disappointment turned to keen interest. We played the "Marche Slave" and Schubert's "Unfinished" Symphony. Gladys Ripley sang an aria from *Samson And Delilah* and "Ave Maria," and we finished with "The Blue Danube." By now, the disappointment had completely evaporated. The applause was thunderous and it was the right kind of applause. It indicated that my music-making had been appreciated.

Wild Cheers At Albert Hall

At the following concert at the Albert Hall, almost 6,600 people were present. Again, there were the first wild cheers as I walked up to the rostrum. By a stroke of misfortune, I broke my baton on the side of the rostrum as I brought it down for the opening of the "Marche Slave" and there was a ripple of laughter as I continued to conduct with half a stick. After that, there was the same feeling of disappointment and the same gradual warming to the music as at Kingston. Again, we finished to the right kind of applause.

Perhaps the funniest aspect of my Albert Hall concert was the criticism in the press. Many years ago, in America, when I had first inserted jokes into what had been a purely musical act, a reviewer wrote: "Mr. Oliver is a skilled musician. Why does he wish to turn himself into a mediocre comic?" Now the wheel had turned full circle.

Using almost the identical words—only the order had changed—one critic now wrote: "Mr. Oliver is an excellent comic. Why will he persist in turning himself into a second-rate conductor?" Both were slaves to that mean attitude of mind which insists that each man must stick to one trade.

Although our repertoire has now broadened to include a full range of concert pieces—a repertoire comparable to that of any symphony orchestra in the country—the Arts Council has so far not seen fit to grant us a subsidy. Nor do we qualify for exemption from entertainments tax. For these reasons, we lose between £200 and £300 a year. Nevertheless, I have felt the venture well worth while because we are bringing music to the people and, in the process, I have gained the comradeship of a fine band of musicians.

In spite of its youth, the British Concert Orchestra has, like all orchestras, a number of "jinxes." For instance, every time we play Tchaikovski's Second Symphony something goes wrong. Once, two violinists were caught in a train-crash and were unable to reach the concert hall in time to play. On another occasion a viola player collapsed and died at rehearsal.

Another jinx is "Tatiana's Letter Song" from Tchaikovski's *Eugen Onegin*. We have played it dozens of times and, though we have engaged the finest soloists who knew it perfectly in rehearsal, on each occasion the soloist has forgotten either the words or the music at the actual performance.

When we play Tchaikovski's Fourth Symphony, however, or the Intermezzo from Ferrari's *School For Fathers*, the concert as a whole goes extremely well.

The most humorous incident of our career occurred at the Birmingham Hippodrome, where we were playing a Beethoven and Tchaikovski programme at a charity concert. It was a Sunday and, following the usual practice, the acts for the following week's variety show had already brought their props to the theatre. One of the acts was a German with a trained seal; throughout our rehearsal in the afternoon the seal whooped and splashed in its tank at the back of the stage. Wondering what would happen during the actual concert, I consulted the manager, who called for the trainer.

The trainer listened patiently to our complaint. "It is all right," he said. "How long you play?"

"Two and a half hours," I said, "starting at six."

The trainer beamed. "I dope him. Everything will be all right."

The first half of the concert went well. Halfway through the interval, a message was handed to me in the dressing-room asking if I would consent to the Lord Mayor saying a few words in support of the charity; after him, the chairman of the entertainments committee would like to thank us publicly for our appearance.

I consented gladly, but when the speeches continued for almost half an hour I began to worry about the time, as we had to return to London the same night. At last, the second half started and, up to the end of the "Emperor" Concerto, everything went smoothly. As we started on Francesca da Rimini, however, I noticed that the concert had already run for two and a half hours.

Tuba Blared Ten Bars Early

With twelve minutes to go, we were halfway through a quiet passage which immediately precedes a tempestuous section in which the tuba has to blow an F sharp. Exactly ten bars before its time, the F sharp blared forth. I whirled round and frowned angrily at the tuba-player for daring to play out of his turn.

A few minutes later, another F sharp is scored for the tuba. Exactly ten bars early, the note came to my ears. This time I was livid, but at the same time anxious. The tuba-player was obviously drunk and capable of wrecking the rest of the concert. However, the music at this point swirls into a glorious welter of sound, and though I heard a number of misplaced F sharps from the tuba, the audience were delighted. I took eight curtain calls, then turned angrily towards the wings.

I strode up to the tuba-player. "Are you drunk?" I demanded. "You were at least ten bars in front of the rest of us."

He looked at me oddly. "Mr. Oliver," he said, "I know this work better than you." It was true. He was a good tuba-player—normally. "I was not ten bars in front," he insisted.

I was about to reply when a tuba-like F sharp thrilled the air. We whipped round. Gurglings and splashes followed. "The seal!" I exclaimed, and started apologizing with a crimson face.

From Radio To TV Success

After *Vic Oliver Introduces* had run for sixty-five weeks on sound, the programme was "rested," and when I suggested to the B.B.C. the following year that the time had come for it to be put on again, I was informed that times had changed and listeners no longer favoured "mixed" entertainment.

From then until late 1948, I heard nothing more about my show. Pat Hilliard, however, had now been transferred to television and suggested over lunch one day that he would like to try it on TV. The formula worked well on vision, too. We ran for one and a half years.

Finally, in 1951, I was approached again by Ronnie Waldman, who had taken Pat Hilliard's place. "I'd like you to try a much more elaborate show on similar lines," he said. We were allotted a top producer, Bill Ward, the orchestra was expanded to fifty and the budget for guest artists was greatly enlarged. And so *This Is Show Business* came on the air in late 1951.

Apart from my radio, television and concert activities, I have of course been appearing in the theatres. In 1948, I played the lead in the highly successful *Latin Quarter* at the London Casino. The following Christmas, at the request

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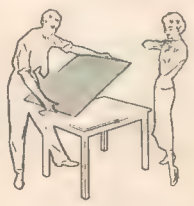

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of Emile Littler, I went into pantomime for the first time in my life. I was extremely unhappy. As King Yolk of Eggville, I was merely the stooge to Richard Hearne's dame and felt very inexperienced beside him. Only in the tenth and closing week was I beginning to get the hang of it.

The next year, after a second edition of *Latin Quarter*, I was persuaded to try pantomime again, this time in Manchester. It was now that my unhappy ten weeks at the Casino paid off. I felt at home from the start and played my part in making the pantomime a great success. We played to packed houses for the entire run. Now that my confidence has been restored, pantomime holds no terrors for me.

Since I myself had such a hard time in my early days in show business, I have always tried to help youngsters who have a genuine talent and the will to succeed. Naturally, many of them try to see me. One father wrote to say that his daughter was determined to go on the stage and, though he was not particularly keen, he felt he should try to help. What could he do? I suggested he bring the girl to see me in my dressing-room at Shepherd's Bush Empire.

Jenny Did Not Falter

She was a tiny girl of fifteen, bright and candid. She could talk freely about herself and had personality. I looked straight into her eyes. "Are you determined to get on at all costs?" I asked. Without flinching she replied. "I am." I tried to discourage her. "Are you willing to go hungry, sleep in cold digs, travel all day every Sunday and be away from home for six months at a time?"

Jenny answered without wavering or faltering. She had none of the doubts that so often beset stage-struck girls of that age. After hearing her recite, I decided that she was likely to be a success. She was, but marriage brought her career to an abrupt end.

A Dutch boy of eighteen who came to my dressing-room at Golders Green Hippodrome in 1947 similarly impressed me. "I am going to be a great actor," he said. "Give me a job—anything—so that I can pay my fees at the Royal Academy of Dramatic Art. I will even shovel coal." At that time, the labour laws made it impossible for me to get him any work in this country. But I could see he was sincere and paid his R.A.D.A. fees myself. Today, he is making good progress in the straight theatre in Holland.

"Now, Fenster, what's this nonsense about needing a secretary?"

My third marriage, with Natalie Conder, has been an unqualified success. After our wedding at Caxton Hall, Westminster, in 1946, we drove north for a fortnight's honeymoon. But after a night at Harrogate and two nights at Edinburgh, my wife decided that she would prefer to go to the country home I then had in Buckinghamshire, so that she could start housekeeping straight away. I gladly agreed, as I am always ready to work.

Except for two periods of three days when I had to go to Paris on business, this was the only holiday we have had together since our marriage.

At first, we had our disagreements like all newly-weds. Natalie said I worked too hard. It was true. I work sixteen hours every day—but I reminded Natalie of the story of the star who was asked if autograph-hunters worried him. He replied: "I'd be far more worried if there weren't any." And so I told Natalie: "I'd be extremely worried if managers didn't ask me to work."

Again, it is often necessary to be away three weeks or more at a time, and this, too, upset Natalie. "Shall we ever have a proper home life?" she asked. Most controversies can be settled by compromise and I promised that, whenever possible, I would travel home on Saturday night and spend as long as I could with her on Sunday. I have faithfully kept to this arrangement and though my weekly B.B.C. recording prevents my spending the whole day at home, I am there long enough for us to exchange the week's news.

I believe our marriage has worked out because Natalie has no interest in show business. There is no ground for jealousy between us, and the fact that she lives permanently at home enables us to meet at least once a week. We share many pleasures such as golf, opera and ballet and allow each other to enjoy alone what we cannot enjoy together.

The greatest joy in our marriage, however, is one which we can share. On May 25, 1950, Natalie bore me a daughter whom we christened Shelley Ann. To me, Shelley is the most wonderful creature on earth. But, to be dispassionate, I should say, perhaps, that she is a good average child. At first, she was a little unhappy because I was never at home long enough for her to get to know me, and each time I returned from a tour she greeted me as a stranger: she burst into tears.

Now that she is three, I ring her up when I am out of town and she tells me what she has been doing during the week. She also compensates for my absence by listening to my recorded radio programmes. Occasionally, however, this leads to complications. She and her mother were once listening to a recorded show when I walked unexpectedly into the room. Shelley was dismayed. For a long time, she refused to believe that I was myself and insisted that the real me was locked up in the radio cabinet.

I am lucky, too, that my wife takes a keen interest in child psychology. Instead of treating Shelley as a baby—a trap into which I frequently fall—she treats her as far as possible like an adult.

When Shelley refused to eat one day, Natalie patiently pointed out that if she didn't eat, she would be hungry by the evening and *very* hungry two days later. "Of course," she concluded, "you can leave it if you like." Shelley thought it over—and started to eat.

Vic Looks Back On Life

Today, when I look round my comfortable home, I often reflect on the vicissitudes of my career; on my aristocratic youth in Imperial Vienna; on my days as a struggling pianist in the United States; on my first futile attempts to make people laugh, and on my early experiences in England, a country I liked so much that I eventually made it my home.

It has been a hard life, but a full one. And it has a happy ending. I hope and pray that my little daughter Shelley will attain the happiness without the heartbreak. THE END

"Gay Adventure" will be published in book form by Harrap in April, under the title "Mr. Show Business" (10s. 6d.).

TO WIN A BRIDE

Continued from page 21

tufts of wire grass which clung to cracks in the rock face. Miquel felt the straps chafe his shoulders. Entignac's pack must be dragging, too, but he gave no sign of it.

When they rested again they were on the spine of a high ridge: seven thousand feet up, but still lower than the enclosing rim of peaks. Entignac said, "You know where we are?"

"Very well."

VERY well indeed. His judgment of the path they would take had proved right, and his heart did a jig. He said without expression, "The frontier is an hour away. I have been as far as the wire but not beyond."

Entignac slipped off his pack and took out his safety gear. Below each knee he strapped a leather gaiter, from the outer side of which protruded steel spikes—metal fangs as vicious as those of the dogs they might meet. He held out his arms and Miquel fastened similar bands round his wrists. Thus equipped, he was the equal of any dog, provided he guarded his throat.

But it was better to avoid the dogs, to cover their own human scent. Entignac opened a tin and shielded his eyes as he scattered pepper over his legs.

"Now you."

"We are not at the frontier yet."

It was the first time he had opposed the other and he heard a growl of anger. "The police dogs don't respect the frontier. They can rip you this side just as easily as the other. That is your own affair; but what you are carrying is mine, and it is worth more to me than you are. The safety gear."

Miquel hated to use pepper against the dogs. He gazed at the other man for a moment, and then slowly unzipped his windcheater and drew out the rolled leather bands. When he had wrapped his legs, Entignac bound his wrists and handed him the tin of pepper. Miquel turned, stooped and shook it. Entignac did not see that he had not removed the lid.

"We shall not be able to talk after this. The guards are nothing, even though they are armed and we are not. They cannot see and hear as we can, and they have no liking for a climb. So they let the dogs roam free."

"You think there will be more than one?"

"With luck there will be none at all. But if things go badly there will be one dog, no more. In that case. . . ."

Miquel listened carefully and loosened the knife at his waist. But it was an empty gesture, like the pepper tin. He was going to use neither knife nor pepper.

They probed their way downhill, testing each stone and spur with their rope soles and controlling their breathing. Miquel was conscious of a stirring excitement, and his nerves tingled with the alertness of a night animal.

The crags were behind them and they made their slow way along a watercourse, in spring a mass of snow water but now dry and smooth. They were below the tree line again and the embankments on either side gleamed with silver firs.

The little valley widened and dropped abruptly. Half a mile ahead, unseen, lay the frontier wire and beyond it was France: a man-made distinction, for the gullies and peaks were the same Pyrenees of their homeland.

Miquel exulted. As he padded along, he lightly touched the boulders and trees, as familiar to him as his village street. Through ten nights of waiting, through the long cold hours, he had told himself this was the way Entignac must come. Everything depended now on——

Entignac, two yards ahead, disappeared. In the same unthinking movement Miquel also went down and lay still. He had seen it too: a faint glow of light which flickered and vanished. Bad luck and good luck in the same instant. Bad, that in all this empty desolation they should run into a guard; good, because if he had any notion of their presence he would not have lit a cigarette.

MIQUEL stirred, levering ahead with elbows and knees. One of the spikes at his wrist scraped against a rock. He paused, unstrapped the bands and discarded them. He did not need such trappings. What he must lean on now was his faith in himself.

Crawling again, he came abreast of the motionless Entignac. The older man's eyes gleamed with black hatred at his stupidity and his hard fingers clamped on Miquel's shoulder. Miquel wrenched free and went on. Soon, Entignac, soon you will see and you will not hate me. . . .

Another hundred yards, and a boulder between himself and Entignac. Miquel eased back on his haunches and stood up. Very softly he whistled, a note high and sweet.

Nothing.

Again the clear note.

It was on him with no warning at all, a black ghost materializing from the ground.

Miquel felt a stab of fear; and then the beast was snuffling his thighs, nosing the familiar pocket which for ten nights had not failed it.

Miquel rubbed its muzzle with his palm and took out a small paper parcel. The dog snapped before he could open it, tearing the paper and wolfing greedily at the rabbit meat. While it gulped, Miquel crooned in the back of his throat and fondled the rough hair of the great shoulders.

He caressed the animal, his head close to its ear, until it finished the meal and butted against him for more. Then it lurched and stiffened and its eyes looked straight into those of Miquel in numb bewilderment. He gave a gentle shove and the dog keeled over on its side. Its head came up twice before subsiding and then it lay still, snoring hoarsely.

Miquel gave a final pat and straightened up.

They were beyond the wire and two hours inside France before Entignac broke his silence.

He said grumpily, "You were a fool. It might have been another dog altogether. And then?"

"For ten nights it has always been the same one."

"Is it dead?"

"Sleeping. I am fond of animals."

"And of girls too, eh?"

In the gloom Miquel could see a smile that twitched and then broadened into something he had never seen before; a grin. He said sedately, "Of one girl."

They marched on together in a comfortable silence which needed no more words. THE END

2.

The darling actually stayed on after the party was over to help me clear up the debris.

He really *did* help too, and you know what utter chaos my friends always seem to leave behind! I couldn't have been more touched, and when next day he sent me a box of those marvellous Black Magic chocolates— my, those centres! — I really felt a

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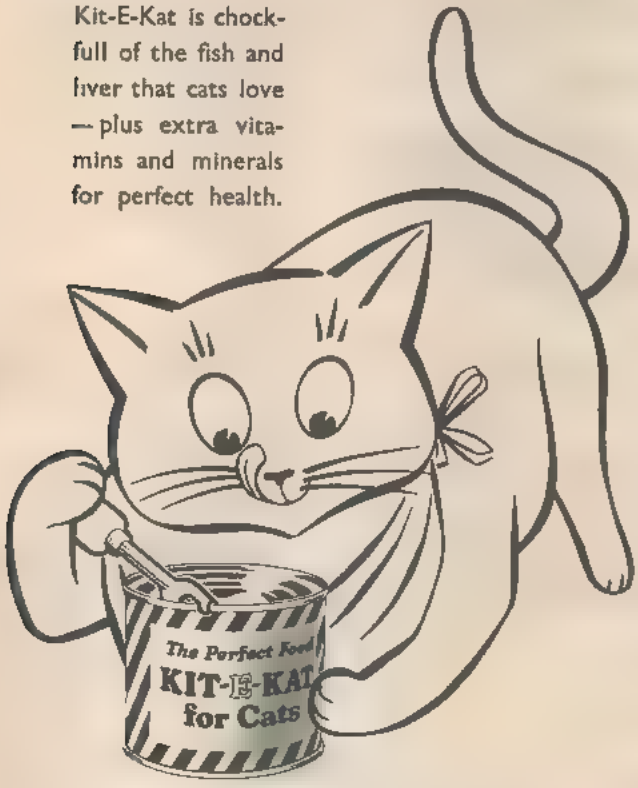

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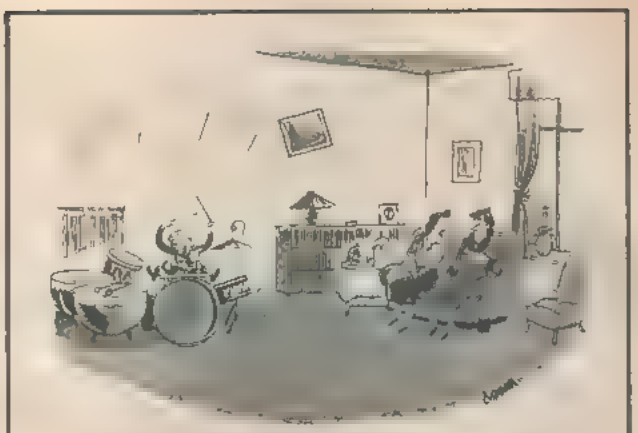

"Then it was the violin—he made no headway with that, either"

THE STRANGE LAND

Continued from page 25

pouches. "Why did you lie to me? Why did you say this man has flown from England?"

I looked across at Jan, but before I could speak, Bilvidic cut in angrily.

"You think we are complete fools? We checked with Paris and London. The story is false. Nevertheless—" he glanced at Jan—"you are on that flight from Tangier to Casablanca and you are shown on the list of passengers as having booked from Paris."

In the silence he lit a cigarette and sat on the corner of his desk. "It was very stupid, Monsieur Latham. And you—" He turned to Jan. "Your name is Roland Tregareth Wade, yes? And you are the owner of the yacht that is wrecked near Tangier on the night of the eighteenth?"

Jan said nothing.

"Very well," Bilvidic said curtly. "You are wanted for questioning. We have to be in Casablanca by the morning."

"By tomorrow morning?" My mouth fell open. It was over three hundred miles across the mountains. "It means driving all night. You can't mean ——"

"I am sorry. I do not wish to drive through the night any more than you do. Nor do I enjoy being here in the desert for Christmas Day," he added sharply. "It is because of the British authorities. This man has been masquerading as Dr. Kavan. They insist that the matter of his identity is resolved immediately."

"It can be cleared up in five minutes. I tell you, he *is* Dr. Kavan," I said.

Bilvidic tapped the ash off his cigarette. "The body of Dr. Jan Kavan," he said carefully, "was washed up on the coast of Portugal near Cape St. Vincent four days ago."

There was silence in the room.

"But," I said after a moment, "that must be Wade's body. I swear to you this is Dr. Jan Kavan."

Bilvidic shook his head. "I am sorry, monsieur. We have a full report at headquarters. The state of the body, of course, was not good. But the general description is exact, and he is wearing a windbreaker purchased in Dur-ham, which is where Kavan worked. It even had the name Kavan on it, and in the pocket is a watch inscribed in Czech which was given to Kavan by his wife." He shook his head. "There is absolutely no doubt, monsieur. But the British insist that we check the identity of your friend here, and also there is the matter of illegal entry into Morocco."

"Monsieur Bilvidic——" I began, but again he cut me short.

"Had you ever met Dr. Kavan before?"

"No, but——"

"Had you any idea what he looked like? Have you had occasion to call on this gentleman's services as a doctor?"

"No, of course not."

"So you do not know if he is a doctor or not. Have you ever heard him speak Czech?" I looked across at Kavan. "Well, have you, monsieur?"

"It's no use, Philip," Jan said quietly, speaking in English.

"No use!" I stared at him, angry and a little scared, unsure of myself and him for the first time.

Bilvidic stood up, smiling sourly. "You are not so sure now? Perhaps one can increase your uncertainty." He nodded to a plain-clothes man who was standing against the door, and he opened it and disappeared.

There was a momentary silence as we waited, and then there was a man's heavy tread, and also the shorter, lighter tap of a woman's heels.

We were all of us facing the door as it was thrust open and she entered. It was Karen Kavan and she stopped in the doorway, her face frozen with the shock of seeing us there. Her gaze went straight to Jan. But he made no move, merely staring at her expressionlessly. She turned to me then. There was a desperate, bewildered look in her eyes—it was as though she were pleading for me to tell her what to do.

And then Bilvidic's voice cut the stillness of the room. "One question, madame." He pointed to Jan. "Is this man your husband?"

Jan turned abruptly towards the window and the girl's lips trembled. She said, with an effort, "No."

"Have you ever seen him before?"

"Yes." Her voice was scarcely above a whisper.

"What is his name, please?"

"So far as I know, it is Monsieur Wade."

"Thank you." Bilvidic nodded and the plain-clothes man opened the door for her. She paused a moment. Then she went quickly out, and Jan made no move to stop her going.

"For God's sake!" I cried. "I know you are Jan Kavan, and that was your wife, Karen."

He glanced at me, and then away. "The sooner we get started the better," he said to Bilvidic.

Bilvidic nodded. "Exactly." He motioned to the door, and it was opened, and Jan walked out.

I took Julie's arm and followed. She looked pale and a little scared. "What do you want me to do, Philip? There must be something I can do."

"Do you think you could drive the bus alone as far as Ouarzazate?"

"Of course."

"Go to the Gite d'Etapes there and phone the British Consul at Rabat. Tell him the whole thing. Make him understand that this man is Dr. Kavan."

She nodded. "Yes of course. And then I'll come on to Casa."

"It's too long a drive."

"I'll leave the bus at Ouarzazate

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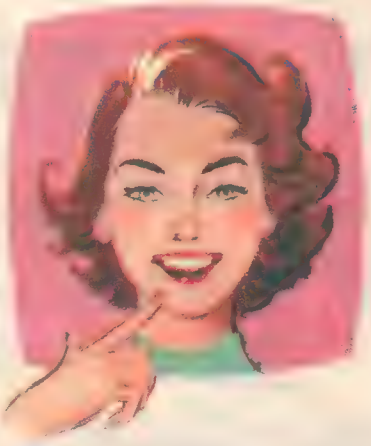

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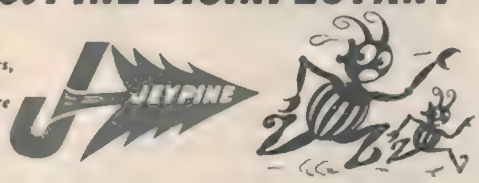

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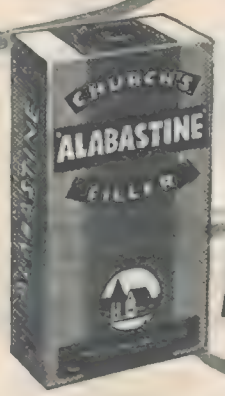

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and come on by coach." She tried to smile. "Don't worry. I'll be there to bail you out."

I slipped out of the office and walked down the passage. I had seen Karen standing by the open door of one of the other offices.

When I reached the door she was standing by the window, staring out at the desert.

I went over to her. "Why did you say that? You're safe. You're both of you safe. What was the point of it?"

She stared at me as though I were a stranger to her.

"For goodness' sake," I shouted, "tell them the truth! I don't know what Jan's idea is, but it'll only land him in real trouble. Come back now and tell Bilvidic who Jan is."

She made a small movement. "If that is what Jan wants, he would have spoken to me."

"He doesn't understand," I said. "He doesn't know what he's doing. A body has been found in Portugal and sooner or later the police will——"

"Leave me alone!" she cried desperately. "Just leave me alone." I realized I had been shaking her, and withdrew my hands. Footsteps sounded in the passage.

"You are ready, monsieur?" It was Bilvidic. I glanced at Karen. There were tears welling from the corners of her eyes.

Bilvidic touched her arm. "I have arranged with Mademoiselle Corrigan for you to travel with her. There is not room for more than four in the Citroën. She will take you to Ouarzazate."

"Thank you, monsieur." Her voice was no more than a whisper.

WHEN we reached the Citroën, Jan was already seated in the back with the second police officer. It was raining and the wind was thrashing through the *palmerie*. There wasn't a soul in sight. The forts, the *souk*, the track leading down to Ksar Foum-Skhira—it was all empty and lifeless. Bilvidic motioned me into the passenger seat and climbed in behind the wheel.

A jagged line of lightning stabbed the darkness of the sky above the gorge and the noise of thunder went rumbling through the hills. We went out past the Foreign Legion fort. Rain drummed on the bonnet and stabbed into the sand. A grey murk enveloped us.

Looking back, I saw the old bus turn and begin to lumber along in our wake.

A heavier gust of rain hit the car, and then the full weight of the storm hit us. The wheels churned in the mud of the *piste*. The car slithered and swayed. And then the storm slackened again and there were the mountains right ahead of us.

We reached the harder surface at the foot of the mountains and began to climb.

"If we could have had two more days. . . ." There was a note of bitterness in Jan's voice as he leant forward in his seat, peering down the mist-wrapped length of the gorge.

THEN we had turned the corner under the cliff overhang and the gorge was behind us. Far below, down the mountain slope, I glimpsed the bus nosing its way across the flat valley floor. Then it was lost in a curtain of rain. "They'll never make it," I said, as the Citroën's wheels spun again on a soft patch and Bilvidic fought to retain control of the car.

"Then they will stop and wait," he replied impatiently. "The girl is not a fool. She will not try it if it is not possible."

It had become very dark and all we could see was the rain and a few yards of mountain stretching ahead of us. The rain was solid like a million steel rods thrust at an angle into the ground. The car juddered, the engine roared. Mud spurted up past my window as the wheels clawed at the surface.

We turned a bend that overlooked the gorge and began to climb a straight stretch of track beside a shallow rock cliff down which rainwater streamed, glistening blackly.

"I am sorry," I cried in Bilvidic's ear. "You must stop. We cannot leave the girls in this. I insist, monsieur!" I was gripping his arm.

"*Attention, Georges!*" Bilvidic threw my hand off as he called the warning to his assistant. I heard Jan struggling in the back to hold the assistant and I reached for the ignition key. Bilvidic caught hold of my hand. The car swayed wildly. We were coming up to another bend now, and as I flung him off and grabbed again for the key, the wheels hit a stone and suddenly the rock wall of the cliff closed in against my window. There was a crash and I was flung forward, striking my head against the windscreen. The car stopped dead.

"*Imbecile!*" Bilvidic screamed. "Look what you have done!" His face was white with anger. All the right-hand wing and the front of the bonnet were crumpled.

"If you'd stopped when I asked you——" I said.

Bilvidic swore. The starter whined, but nothing happened. He kept his finger on the button. The rain was torrential, water pouring everywhere, glistening on the rocks, running in little streams.

"In all the years I have lived in

Morocco," Bilvidic said, "I have never known a storm like this." He got out of the car then, and I followed him. Jan was already standing in the rain, peering back down the *piste*.

"We'd better stop them coming up," I said, and while the two police officials got into their raincoats, Jan and I set off together.

The water ran almost ankle-deep down the rutted surface of the track, and our shoes were slithering and squelching through mud and water.

A wind sprang up, mist swirled in white streamers over our heads, and then abruptly it cleared, the rain stopped, and we were in bright sunshine. All the wet, glistening landscape of rock smiled at us. But above and behind us the sky was black with storm.

And then we saw the bus. It was caught on a bend far below us. The sound of its engine, revving violently, came up to us faintly on the wind, an angry sound like a buzz-saw.

As we drew near the bus, we saw that it was slewed half across the track, its wheels deep in mud. Karen was kicking rocks under the spinning tyres as Julie revved the engine.

Jan stopped. "Listen, Philip." He gripped my arm. "I'm going back to Kasbah Foum. The whole valley is cut off now. It may be several days. . . ." He was staring down towards Karen. "In two days we might have that shaft opened up."

"That won't do you much good," I said. "Not now."

"Who knows?" He looked up at me and he was smiling. He seemed suddenly to have found himself. "I'll take Karen with me," he said. "At least we'll have a little time together. . . ." He started down towards the bus. "Karen!" he called. "Karen!"

She came running to meet him then. They were both running and he was calling her name and she was answering him, her eyes shining, her face suddenly quite beautiful. They met in the rain and the mud there and he caught her in his arms.

The rain swept down suddenly again. "You two had better get going," I shouted. "It's a goodish way to the camp."

"Oh, we'll make it before dark," Jan answered. He said it as though he were going on a picnic, his voice was so full of happiness.

"What do you want me to tell Bildivic?"

He laughed. "Tell him Monsieur Wade has gone down to Kasbah Foum." He called to Karen, who had run back to the bus and was speaking urgently to Julie. He went down to her and took her hand.

Together they crossed the *piste* and dropped on to the steep slope of the mountainside.

In a moment the two of them had disappeared into the driving mist of rain.

"What happened up there?" Julie called out to me from the cab of the bus. "Couldn't you get through?"

I climbed in beside her and was in the middle of explaining to her about the crash when a voice hailed us out of the rain. It was Bilvidic.

"Where's Wade?" he demanded, his eyes searching the roadway and the limited area of mountainside visible in the downpour.

"He's gone to Kasbah Foum," I told him.

"The fool!" he exclaimed angrily. "He cannot go far in this rain. He cannot sleep on the mountains." He looked up at Julie. "And where is Madame Kavan? Why is she not with you?"

I started to explain, but Julie stopped me. "She's not very well," she told him. "She's resting in the back. She is quite exhausted, poor thing. It was a great shock to her to discover that that man is not her husband. She had hoped. . . . You understand, monsieur?"

Bildivic nodded, clicking his tongue sympathetically. "Yes, of course, mademoiselle. I should have realized." He looked about him. "He cannot get out of the valley, unless he walks. And

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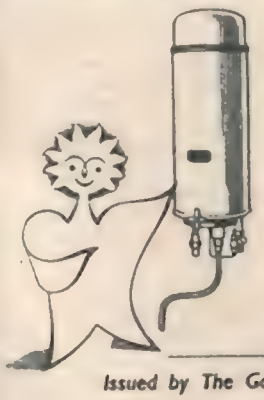

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if he does that one of the military posts will soon be notified." He stood for a moment staring down towards Kasbah Foum. Then he turned abruptly. "Now we will go back to the post. I must phone the *chef de territoire*."

With him guiding me, I started to back the bus down the hill. There was no room to turn and I had to go on backing until we reached the level sand at the foot of the mountains. And there we bogged down.

Bilvidic left with his assistant for the Post. It was beginning to get dark and Julie and I watched the two Frenchmen go, sitting in the bus in our stockinged feet, thankful we hadn't got to trudge three miles through that mud.

We spent the night where we were, and in the morning the sun shone out of a clear sky. The air was clean and fresh after the rain. We did the chores and then sat around waiting for the *piste* to dry, not talking much, just enjoying the sense of being alone. It was the first time Julie and I had been alone together and I think we both felt that these were precious, stolen hours.

I glanced at her, seeing the smooth, clear-cut line of her features, the black hair swept back and softly curving to her shoulders. She looked as fresh and sparkling as the day.

"When we've got ourselves out of the mess we're in," I said, "I'd like to come down here again and travel through this country."

She looked at me. "Like this?" And I knew she meant the two of us and the old bus. She smiled. "Yes, let's do that."

THE desert sand dried quickly and by midday we were able to travel on it. As I drove across the open space between the forts, I saw that the French truck was still parked outside the Bureau. Its bonnet was up and both the orderly and Bilvidic's assistant were working on the engine. Bilvidic's assistant scowled at us. As we went slowly past, we heard them trying to start the engine. It would not work.

There was a big crowd gathered by the ruins of the *souk*. They stared at us in silence as we drove by, a sullen, menacing group. And as we skirted Ksar Foum-Skhira along the edge of the *palmerie* there seemed a brooding stillness.

"Something's happened," Julie said. "They wouldn't all be gathered round the *souk* like that——"

"Bilvidic must be stuck at the Bureau," I said. "No transport. He must love us."

The camp looked empty when we reached it. The sides of the tents had been rolled up; clothes and bedding were laid out to air in the sun. The stream was much wider now, a surging flood of rust-red water. As we got down, Karen appeared at the entrance to the cook tent and waved to us. I barely recognized her. She was wearing a pair of Ed White's khaki trousers and a bush shirt several sizes too large for her. She was barefoot.

"You look like a castaway," Julie said.

Karen laughed. "I'm cooking. Isn't it wonderful!" She tossed back her hair, her eyes sparkling.

"Where's your husband?" I asked.

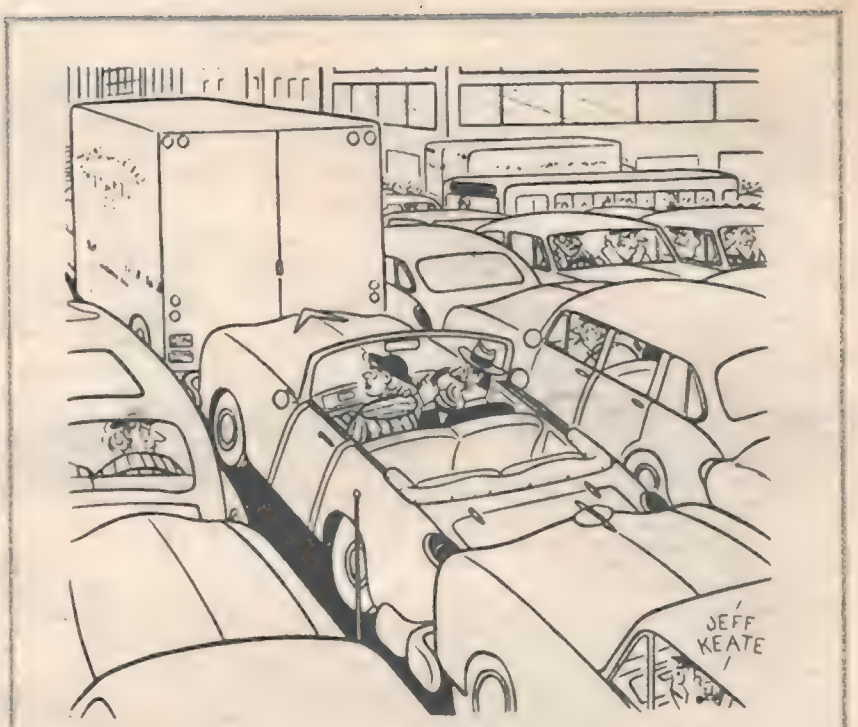
"He is up in the gorge." The laughter died out of her eyes. "And please, you must not call him my husband. He has told Ed that his name is Wade." She hesitated and then said, "Please. You must try to understand. The police think Jan Kavan is dead. It is the answer to everything." She stared up into my face, her eyes pleading. "You saved his life. You got him out of Tangier. You must help him now."

"How?" I asked. "What does he want me to do?"

From the entrance to the gorge came the muffled thud of an explosion. Karen turned her head sharply, an anxious expression on her face.

"What are they doing?" Julie asked.

"Blasting. They have cleared the entrance to the mine and they are



"I hope we get out of all this mess before the five o'clock rush starts"

blasting to break up the rock falls inside the shaft so that they can clear it away by hand."

I left the girls and walked up the track and into the gorge. Water was pouring in a cascade over the lip of the lake. It was a violent brick red. The bulldozers stood idle. There was no sign of Jan or Ed White. But the rubble had been cleared from the base of the cliff to expose a round opening from which a cloud of rock dust drifted.

I walked towards the entrance to the mine. A little pile of clothing lay beside a plain deal box which was marked in red: *EXPLOSIVES. Danger—Handle with Care.* The top of it had been ripped off to expose cartridges of dynamite complete with slow-match fuses.

There was the sound of a stone shifting and Ed White appeared, staggering under the weight of a rock he was carrying. "Oh, it's you, Latham." He dropped the rock on to a pile they had made just outside the entrance. "I thought I heard somebody."

He glanced up at the cliff top on the far side of the gorge, and then he gave a quick, nervous hitch to his trousers and came over. He was stripped to the waist and dust had caked on the sweat of his body in a white film. He had a gun fastened to his belt. "Well, we've made some progress since yesterday, but we need labour. Wade thought you might help there. You know the language."

"He's told you then?" I asked tentatively.

"About his name? Yeah, he told me."

"It must have come as a bit of a shock to you."

He looked at me for a moment and then said, "Between you and me I don't care what he calls himself. All I know is I like the guy and we get on together."

AT that moment Jan emerged, blinking in the sunlight. "Philip!" He came quickly forward. He, too, was stripped to the waist and the dust was white on his thick, hairy body. "I'm so glad you've come. We need your help. Bilvidic isn't down at the camp, is he?"

"He's at the Bureau, I expect. The truck has broken down, and the Citroën must be up the mountain still. He's stuck."

"Good." Jan smiled buoyantly. "We need men up here. There's tons of rock to be hauled. We need twenty men at least." The eagerness was back in his voice again. "I thought if you could go down and have a word with Moha, maybe we could hire men from his village. Look at this." He pulled a piece of crumbled rock from his pocket. "That's polybasite—a complex ore, but one where the extraction of the silver is a simple, quite primitive process. Probably that's what Marcel Duprez found."

I turned to Ed, but his attention was away. He was looking up at the cliff top on the far side of the gorge. "Look at him . . . the swine!" he cried, and his voice was pitched a shade higher than normal. "He was there all day yesterday, too—just sitting there, watching us."

I shaded my eyes. A small, turbaned figure sat cross-legged and motionless in a natural niche right at the top of the cliff. "Who is he?" I asked.

"How the hell should I know? They change the guard about midday and a new guy takes over. They just sit there, watching us." He turned away to get his clothes. "It gives me the creeps."

I looked at Jan. "Ali?"

HE nodded. "I imagine so." He glanced towards Ed White, now pulling on his clothes, and frowned. "I found Ed all packed up to go last night. He seemed scared stiff."

"Why? Because Ali has men watching him?"

Jan nodded. "That and something that happened yesterday afternoon. He had a visit from the Caid's younger son—the man who made tea for us when we visited the *kasbah* that night. He rode out on a white mule to give Ed a message from his father."

Ed White's shadow fell between us. "He spoke French, but I got the idea," he said. "I was to get out, and quick."

"Why?" I asked.

"How the hell do I know why? Could be that the food trucks haven't arrived and the people are getting sore. Could be that your friend Ali is just trying to scare me. I don't know. But I can tell you this; I was plenty scared last night." His gaze swung again to the watcher on the cliff. "Those three Ay-rabs I had working for me here were paid good dough. They wouldn't have quit for nothing." He shook his head angrily, buttoning up his bush shirt. "I suppose Miss Corrigan is down at the camp now?"

"Yes."

"At least those two girls ought to go down to the Post. I don't mind staying on here so long as you guys are with me. But they should be down at the Post."

His attitude made me feel uneasy. "What are you expecting to happen?" I demanded.

He pushed his fingers through his—

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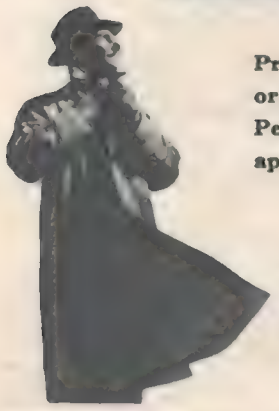

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hair. "If I knew that, I wouldn't be so jittery. But the people here have got no food, and now there's this discoloration of the water. . . ."

None of us spoke after that and we walked down to the camp in silence.

Lunch was laid out in the open under the fly of the big tent as it had been on Christmas Day. But the atmosphere was very different. Ed White moodily fidgeted with his knife. He said, at last, "My view is we should all go down to the Post. When Legard gets back——"

"No," Jan said, almost violently. "I'm damned if I'll leave here now. A day's work might see that shaft opened up. And if it is a workable mine. . . ."

"Well, of course, I see your point," Ed said. "I'm pretty interested myself to know whether there's still silver to be got out of it. But that isn't the reason I'm here, as you know."

"Then what is the reason?" Jan demanded.

"Exactly what I told you." He sounded surprised. "I never even knew there was a chance of finding silver. . . ." He checked himself. He was staring at Jan with a puzzled frown. "Didn't you bother to read my letters?"

Jan's eyes widened slightly with the shock of realizing that he had nearly given himself away. Ed White had written to the dead Wade. "Of course, of course," he said. "But one can give different reasons."

"I wrote you the truth. I am a construction engineer. But I've always been interested in archaeology, and I've got a bee in my bonnet about this place Kasbah Foum. An old collector once showed me a manuscript—it was the diary of an Englishman who had turned Muslim and lived in North Africa as an Arab trader in the early fifteen hundreds. In it, he described a great stone city built at the entrance to a gorge down here south of the Atlas. He had traded from that city for several years and he knew it well. And this is what interested me."

Ed's face was mobile with his enthusiasm. "He described a shaft or tunnel running from the cliff face at the entrance to the gorge. There were rooms cut back into the rock from the sides of this tunnel and these had been used partly as the city treasury and partly as an arsenal. He went to Mecca and on to Arabia, and some years later he came back to that same city. It had been sacked and was partly in ruins. And a great landslide had poured down the mountains, completely covering the entrance to the tunnel."

He glanced round at us. "Well, two years back, I got this job at Sidi Slimane air base and I came down here—just out of curiosity. And there were the ruins of the city and there was the slide he'd described."

"But it's fascinating," Julie said. "You might find all sorts of treasures there."

"Maybe," Ed said. "On the other hand, the people who sacked the city may have looted the treasury. But whatever I find, when it's opened up, I shall be the first man to set foot in there for almost five centuries. That's pretty exciting. At least to me." He turned and glanced at Jan. "That's why my angle on this is different from yours. A few days one way or the other won't make any difference to me."

A silence settled on the table.

Jan got suddenly to his feet. "Suppose we have another rainstorm like we did last night? It could bring the whole mountainside down and cover the entrance again. I think we should push straight on with opening up the shaft."

Ed sat there, considering it. After a moment, he nodded. "Okay," he agreed. "Maybe you're right."

"I'll go and see Moha," I said. "How many men do you want?"

"As many as he can let us have," Ed answered. "Twenty at least. I'll pay whatever he asks, within reason."

• • •

Moha lay on a bed of cushions and rugs. There was little light in the room and it was very cold. The lines on his face were more deeply etched. His wound, he said, did not worry him except that he could not sit, and if he walked it started to bleed again. He lay there, watching me, and I had the feeling that I wasn't welcome.

Briefly I explained the purpose of my visit. At length he said, "The people are angry, *sidi*. They will not come to work for the man of machines who has destroyed the water."

I tried to explain to him that it was only mineral discoloration, that it would soon pass, but he shook his head and murmured, "*Insh'Allah.*" His people might need money, but nothing I could say would make him send them up to work at the mine.

In the end I left him and walked back to the bus. It had scared me badly, for in the south here water was the same as life, and if they thought the water had been poisoned, anything could happen.

The sun's light was already slanting and the gorge was black in shadow when I got to the mine. I had to go into the shaft to find Jan and Ed. There, in the light of the torches and among the debris of the rock fall, I told them what Moha had said.

We stood there in the torchlit darkness arguing for some time. Jan was angry. Time was running out for him and he desperately wanted to get through that rock fall, to know what was on the other side. But time meant nothing to Ed and he was all for packing up the camp and getting down to the Post.

We went out into the daylight and they washed and put on their clothes. Jan was in a sullen mood.

"Come on," Ed said. "It's no good beefing about it."

"What about the bulldozers?" I asked him.

"We'll pile all the gear and that box of explosives on them and take them with us. I'm not leaving them to be fooled around with by curious villagers. Give me a hand and let's get started. It'll be dark before we get down to the Post, anyway."

We had just started to collect the tools when we heard the sound of footsteps in the entrance to the gorge. We stopped, all three of us, for they were a man's step, but light, as though he had sandals on his feet.

But it wasn't a Berber. It was Kostos, Ali's Greek agent, who had originally tried to get Kavan to give up his rights in Kasbah Foum.

He saw us and jerked himself into a shambling run. His clothes were white with dust and his shoes were cracked and broken, the thin soles breaking away from the uppers. He was shabby and tired and frightened.

"Lat'am! Lat'am! I must stay 'ere. I must stay with you." He was out of breath and his eyes seemed to have sunk back into the dark sockets as though he hadn't slept for a long time. He was unshaven and the blue stubble of his chin emphasized the pallor of his face. A drop of sweat ran down the bridge of his sharp nose and hung on the tip.

"What's the trouble?" I said. "Why do you suddenly prefer our company to Ali's?"

His body shivered. "Caid Hassan is dead," he blurted out. "Ali is in control of Foum-Skhira."

"Hassan dead!" I exclaimed. "But we saw him only——"

"He died last night."

I glanced at Jan. His face was hard. He looked as though he could kill Kostos. "We don't want you here," he said angrily. "Why don't you go to the Post if you're scared?"

"Because at the Post are two men from the Sûreté. I don't like to be so close to the Sûreté." Kostos looked at me almost pleadingly. "You understand, eh, Lat'am?" And then his tone changed to truculence. "Well, I am 'ere now. So what you do? It is a public place, this gorge. You cannot throw me out of it." He looked at Ed and his small black eyes fastened on the holster at his belt. "I see you 'ave guns. That is good. You will give me a gun, eh? I am a very good shot with a pistol."

Ed laughed. It was a hard, tense

"Of course, we had to make sacrifices"

laugh. "What do you think we are—an arsenal? This is the only gun in the place."

"The only gun!" Kostos stared at him, and then his eyes darted quickly round at Jan and myself. "But you have women to protect. You must have guns. You couldn't be such fools. . . ." His voice died away as he saw from our eyes it was the truth.

Jan moved slowly forward then. "What's happened to make you so scared?"

"Philip!" It was Julie's voice and it rang shrilly through the gorge. "Philip!" There was a note of panic in it and I started to run, the others close behind me.

Julie stopped as she came round the base of the slide and saw us. Karen was with her and they stood there, panting. "What is it?" I cried. "What's happened?"

"I think it's Ali," she panted. "There's a whole crowd of them coming up out of the *palmerie*. Some of them are on mules. They're heading straight for the camp."

"Okay," Ed said quietly. "Let's go and see what it's all about."

We didn't have to go far. From the entrance of the gorge we could see them swarming over the camp and round the bus. "Goddammit!" Ed cried. "They're looting the place." He had unbuttoned the holster of his pistol and was pulling it out.

"Better put that away," I said, "till we find out what they want."

"Do you think I'm going to stand by and see my whole outfit vanish under my nose?"

I tightened my grip on his arm. "How many rounds have you got?"

He stared at me. "Only what's in the magazine," he said sullenly, and began cursing under his breath.

Just what was in the magazine . . . and there were at least two hundred men down there!

A MURMUR of sound came up from the camp. They were looting the food, like wasps round a jam pot. A man on a white mule was shouting at them. It was Ali, and he was trying to get them to follow him up towards the gorge.

The crowd increased steadily. It was being joined by little groups of men coming in from the desert and up out of the *palmerie*. A wisp of smoke rose in a blue spiral from the kitchen tent. It drifted lazily up into the still air and then died away as the tent disintegrated.

The other tents were on fire now and then the bus was set alight. We could hear the crackle and roar of the flames above the steady murmur of the mob.

"The rats!" Ed cried. "The dirty rats!" His eyes glistened with tears of rage and frustration. I kept a tight hold of his arm. The situation was explosive enough.

A hand touched my sleeve. It was Julie. "Why are they doing it?" she whispered.

"The Caid is dead," I said. "And they think the water is poisoned." I turned and glanced back at the gorge. The sides were too steep to climb. We should have to retreat back into it until we could climb out. "Come on," I said to the others. "We'd better get started. I don't think they will attack us."

Jan nodded. "Yes. We'd better go." The mob was breaking away from the tents and starting up towards us, packing close round their leader on his white mule. They weren't shouting. They were, in fact, quite silent, so that we could hear the sound of the flames. Their silence was full of menace.

WE started back, but when we came to the bulldozers, Ed stopped. He had his gun out now. "I'm staying here," he said. He looked very young and a little frightened. But his tone was obstinate.

"You'll only get hurt," I said. "Come on now. There are the girls to think of."

"Okay," he said. "You go back with the girls. But I'm staying here."

"Don't be a fool," Jan said.

Ed stared at him sullenly. "These machines represent all the cash I got in the world. If you think I'm going to run off and let these swine . . . Latham, will you stay here with me? I don't speak their language. But if you were here, maybe we could——"

"No," Julie said. "Please, Philip. Don't stay."

But Ed caught hold of my arm. "You're not afraid to face them, are you? I've got a gun. I can hold them off. If you'll only talk to them, explain to them."

"All right," I said, and I turned to Jan and told him to get the girls back up the gorge.

"Do you rate a couple of bulldozers higher than your own life, or Philip's?" Julie demanded. "Please, Philip. Let's get out of here."

"It's all right," I said. "You go on. I'll just have a word with Ali and see what I can do. They won't harm us."

She turned and faced Ed. "Damn you!" she cried. "Damn you and your damned bulldozers." She was crying with anger.

"I'm sorry, Miss Corrigan," Ed said, his voice quiet and restrained. "I appreciate how you feel. But those damned bulldozers cost me eighteen months' work." He looked at me. "You do what you think best, Latham."

"I'll stay, for a moment," I said, and I told Jan to take Karen and

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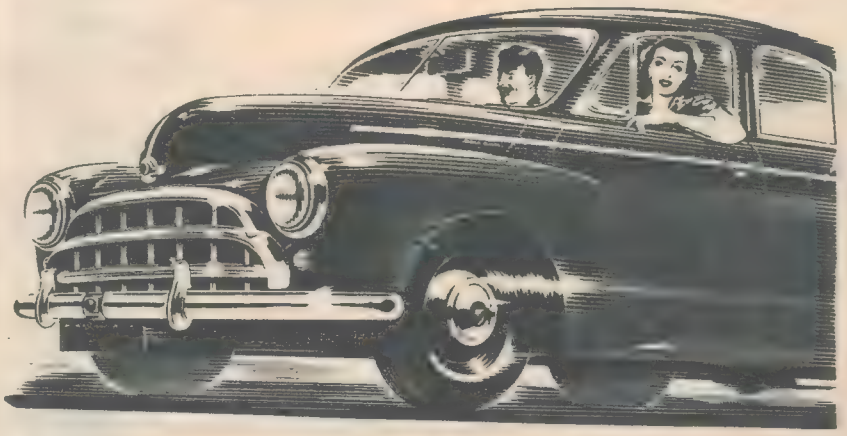

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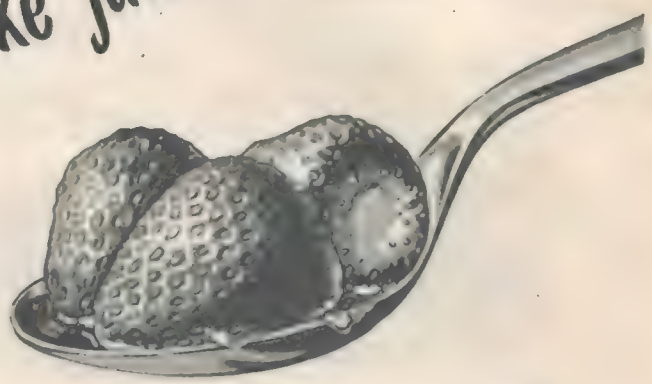

of whole strawberries

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Julie back up the gorge. Julie hesitated, her jaw set, though her face was white and frightened. "Please," I said. "I'll be with you in a few minutes."

I turned then to face the mob that was now coming into the gorge round the base of the slide. As I did so, I caught sight of Kostos beside the bulldozer nearest the mine entrance. "Kostos!" I shouted. "Get back with the others." And as he didn't move, I shouted, "What are you doing?"

He straightened up then and his pale, haggard face was twisted in an evil, frightened grin. He was holding a stick of dynamite. "One gun is not enough," he said. "I like to be certain." And he bit the slow-match of the cartridge off short.

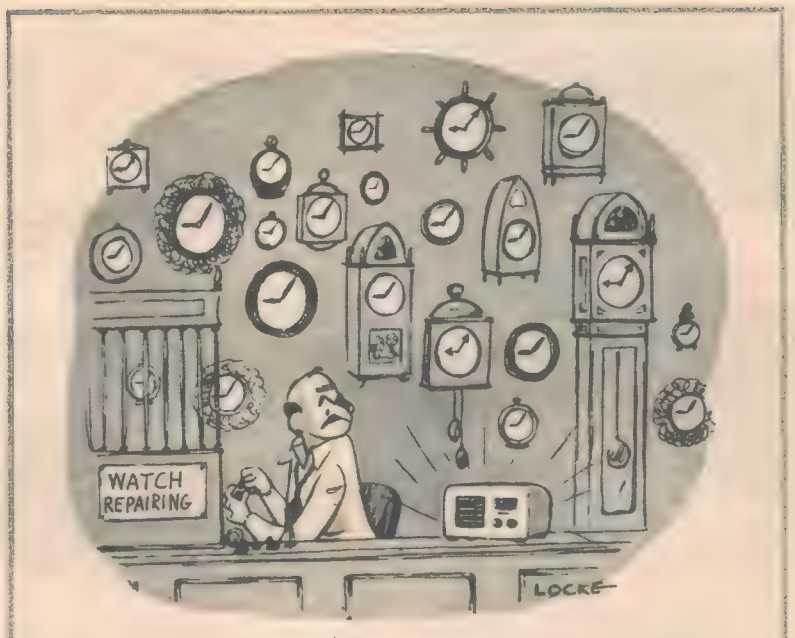
"Kostos!" Ali's voice rang through the gorge. He had halted his white mule just in sight of us, sitting it very still. He was wearing a turban now like his followers and it gave him height, so that he looked a commanding figure with his aquiline face and his blazing eyes. His exile hadn't made him a stranger to the land that had produced him. He belonged, and sitting there, with the sides of the gorge reared up on either side of him, he looked like some virile leader out of the Old Testament. The tribesmen were bunched together behind him.

He called to Kostos again: "So! This is where you are hiding. Come here! At once! You hear me?"

Kostos didn't move. When Ali saw that he wasn't going to come, he turned and gave an order in Berber to the men who were mounted on mules close behind him. They thumped the flanks of their mounts with their bare heels and came riding forward at a trot, their voluminous clothes billowing out behind them.

I shouted at Kostos to come down and join us, for there was panic in his face. He was city bred, with no sense of this country or these people, and I was afraid he'd light the fuse of that stick of dynamite and fling it without thought for the consequences. But instead, he broke and ran, flinging himself at the steep slopes where the fig trees grew.

"Don't shoot," I warned Ed, grabbing his arm. "For God's sake, don't shoot!" He had the gun in his hand and it was aimed at the men who were



"... and the time is nine o'clock"

riding their mules towards us. But he didn't shoot and they swept past us, heading towards Kostos.

The mob was now packed tight in the entrance to the gorge and Ali was coming forward again, his mule stepping daintily on the stones of the track. The men of Foum-Skhira closed up behind him, shoulder to shoulder like a herd of goats. They were mostly young men and they were silent, as though awed by the place and by what they were doing.

I called on them to halt and began to speak to them in their own tongue, telling them that what they were doing was a wicked thing, that the wrath of Allah would fall upon themselves and their families if they did harm to anyone. I started to explain that there was nothing wrong with the water, telling them that if they wished I would drink it myself. And all the time I didn't dare look round to see how far back up the gorge Julie and the others had got, though I was conscious of the movement of rocks and the scrape of feet as Kostos was hounded up the slopes.

Ali screamed at his followers, inciting them to attack. And they answered him with a low murmur like an animal that is being roused to fury.

"We'd better get out of here," I cried, and we began to back. The mob advanced, and the sound that emanated from their throats filled the gorge like the growl of a monster. Then, suddenly, they came in a rush. We turned and ran for it.

The others were already well up the side of the gorge. As I ran, I glimpsed Kostos cut off from the rest of the party by his pursuers and being forced out along the cliff top above the entrance to the mine.

Ed, just ahead of me, turned and looked over his shoulder. Then he stopped. "It's all right," he said, as I halted beside him. "They're not following us." I turned and stared back. The gorge was full of weird howls of triumph and blood-lust. But it wasn't directed against us. All their warlike instincts were concentrated on the two bulldozers. "God-dam them!" Ed breathed.

The men of Foum-Skhira were clustered round the machines like ants. They shouted and yelled and as though by magic the bulldozers moved. They trundled them down across the tight-packed rocks of the dumping ground and toppled them into the water. There was a splash and then the water closed over them and the place was suddenly as God had made it again.

And then they moved towards the entrance to the mine shaft. Ali was already there. He had got off his mule and was standing in front of the entrance. My eye travelled upwards and I saw Kostos balanced precariously on the rocks almost directly above him. He held a stick of dynamite.

A pinpoint flicker of flame showed for an instant in his hand. His arm swung back and a wisp of smoke curved through the air. From where we were, Kostos was no bigger than a puppet and the wisp of smoke curving downwards into the close-packed mob looked as harmless as a feather floating through the air.

It fell into the centre of the crowd, which mushroomed out away from it with an instinctive sense of fear. We could see it sizzling away on the ground now, and I felt a sudden relief. Kostos had left too long a fuse. It would injure nobody. But then Ed gripped my arm. "The dynamite!" he whispered hoarsely. "Do you see it? That box."

It was a small, square patch of yellow close beside the sputtering wisp of smoke. I saw it for a second, and then there was a flash. It was followed instantly by a great, roaring burst of flame. The whole area of beaten rock on which the mob stood seemed lifted skywards. Rocks were flung up and men flattened to the ground. I saw Ali thrown backwards into the mouth of the shaft. And while the rocks were still rising in the air, the sound of the explosion hit us. It was ear-shattering, indescribable, in that confined place. The noise went on, hammering at the cliff faces, rolling upwards over the mountain slopes, and drumming back at us in a stupendous cacophony of sound. I was lifted off my feet, flying through the air.

To be concluded next week

REACH FOR THE SKY

Continued from page 13

Douglas really think it worth trying? (It was tantamount to a dare—as Burge knew.)

Bader tapped on the housemaster's door. Did Mr. Yorke think he was good enough to win a prize cadetship?

"I think you *could* get one, Bader," Yorke said, a little meaningly.

"But I'm no good at maths, sir."

"You're darned lazy at maths, I know that."

"If I worked hard, sir, and you coached, d'you think I could catch up?"

"If you worked hard," said Yorke, "I *know* you could. But I'm not going to waste time coaching unless you *will* work. Are you prepared to?"

Bader took a breath and said: "Yes, sir, I'll have a shot."

That spring (1928) he became captain of cricket. Then in June a letter called him to London for the R.A.F. examination, interview and medical. About a week later the results came through. The unemotional, numbered paragraphs of the Air Ministry letter told him he had come fifth in the examinations, had won a prize cadetship and would be required to present himself at Cranwell in September with a change of underclothes, bowler hat and toilet articles.

He was proud when he told Dingwall.

"From what I know of Cranwell, all the chaps there have motor-bikes," Dingwall observed. "I think you'd better have one, too, as a reward for your work."

He pressed the point over the boy's reluctance with discreet insistence, and soon Bader had a second-hand, flat-twin Douglas motor-cycle.

At Sprotborough his mother, though proud of him, was still dubious about the Air Force as a career. As 'Derick had gone off to South Africa, Douglas got more attention than usual and responded warmly to it.

In the second week in September, young Bader, boisterously cheerful, strapped two small suitcases to the pillion of the motor-cycle, rammed a new bowler hat rakishly over the headlight, kissed his mother, shook the vicar's hand, and pelted with exhaust blaring down the highway towards Cranwell. Two hours later, roaring down the Ancaster straight four miles from Cranwell, he saw a cow wander across the road ahead and swerved; his front wheel hit the grass verge and the motor-cycle kicked over the bank and cartwheeled on the other side.

Bowler Hat Parade

Thrown clear on the grass, he got groggily to his feet, shaken and bruised but otherwise, surprisingly, unhurt. Watched vacantly by the idiot cow, he hauled the motor-cycle upright, wheeled it back to the road and jabbed the kick-starter. Everything seemed all right till he noticed the headlamp sticking through the top of the bowler hat where the crown had burst and a flap at the top gaped open like a tin lid. Instead of dismay he felt a wicked satisfaction, flung a leg over the saddle and roared off. Eight minutes later he rode through the gates of Cranwell and into the Royal Air Force.

In the morning he went on parade for the first time—in bowler hat order. Bader was not so happy about his hat now. He tried to tuck the loose flap inside the crown, but when they were snapped to attention on the gravelled square he had a feeling (later confirmed) that the torn flap was sticking up like a lid again. A warrant officer with a red and bony face walked down the line, inspecting each face. In front of Douglas he stopped and stared. With an arid voice he said: "And what is *your* name, sir?"

"Bader, sir."

The voice crunched again: "And what do you think you are, Mr. Bader? A comedian?"

"I had an accident on the way yesterday——" he started.

After five seconds or so the warrant officer cut him short. "I don't think I wish to hear any more." He gazed once more at the hat, once more into the young man's eyes, turned and walked frigidly down the ranks.

About a week later — a sunny afternoon late in September with the trees still in summer leaf—he reported to the flight hangar with flying kit. A chunky little man came into the cadet pilots' room and introduced himself in a quiet voice as Flying Officer Pearson. Bader was to be his pupil. They went out on the tarmac and Pearson led him, self-conscious in his new flying kit, to a flimsy-looking biplane, fabric-covered wings harnessed together with struts and wires. It was an Avro 504, the same type he had sat in at Cranwell five years earlier.

"We're going up for half an hour," Pearson said. "You won't touch the controls this time. It's just to get you used to the idea of flying." The propeller spun into noisy life, and in a little while they were bouncing across the field. Gently the grass sank below, wing-tips tilted, and Douglas, leaning over the cockpit rim, wind whipping at his face, looked down on green country, exhilaration bubbling in him.

"How did you like it?" Pearson asked when they landed, and found his answer in gleaming eyes.

Next afternoon Flight Cadet D. R. S. Bader took the control column in the air for the first time, gingerly at first, then too tightly, till Pearson's voice urged him to relax. Stick gently forward and the nose dipped; gently back and it rose; stick to each side and it tilted. Then feet on the rudder bar and the first co-ordinated turns. Taut concentration for a few minutes: then the athlete's eye, mind and muscle began to combine in harmony and he had the feel of it.

After a landing in October, when the pupil had had only six and a half hours' dual instruction, Pearson got out and said: "D'you think you could take it around on your own?" Douglas grinned and nodded, and Pearson casually waved him off, saying: "All right. Don't bend it." It is always done like that, before a pupil has time to start worrying.

Alone In The Air

Bader did not worry; he opened the throttle and eased the Avro into the air, revelling to be up alone and guiding the vibrating thing round the perimeter. Gently he turned upwind, slanted her down towards the field; and now memory and tension faded from the rapt and lonely moments as he jockeyed her down, flattening, holding off, off, as the tail sank until the little aeroplane settled in a velvety and somewhat flukey three-pointer, giving him a stab of joy.

"Pretty smooth," said Pearson

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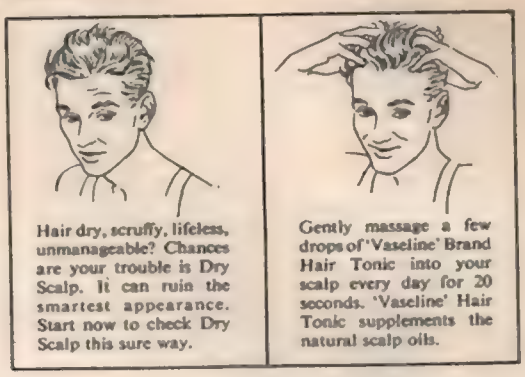

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tolerantly when he had taxied in. "I bet you don't do another one as good for a couple of months."

Pearson nearly took his words back because his pupil was consistently smooth in his flying, landings as well, and the instructor fairly soon realized that he had the eye and timing of a natural pilot. Perhaps too much exuberance? But under that lay a disciplined zeal to shine at the things that stirred him—in this case to fly with delicate accuracy.

Now he had gone solo, Flight Cadet Bader wanted to be a fighter pilot, and flying vied with rugger for his devotion. He enjoyed Cranwell exceedingly. It was like school but even better because, in spite of the discipline, pupils were treated more as adults.

Men Of The World

Sometimes they could stay out until midnight, they could ride motor-bikes (though cars were strongly forbidden), smoke and be men of the world. After a couple of puffs at a cigarette he had tossed it away with distaste. Besides, it was not good for one's fitness. He tried a pipe, liked it, decided it would not clog his lungs if he did not inhale, and soon was an addict, seldom seen without a stub pipe between his teeth.

In the air Pearson was initiating him into aerobatics, teaching him not to throw the Avro about but to coax her immaculately through every antic in the book. As well as enjoying the thrill, Bader began to find the joy of an artist—in a slow roll, for instance, revolving her evenly about her axis without losing height.

Yet not all his flying was copybook. An enterprising fellow-cadet named Hank More evolved a hair-raising trick of climbing out of his rear cockpit in mid-air and crawling forward to tie a handkerchief about the joystick in the empty front cockpit, then getting back into the rear cockpit. One had to take one's parachute off to do it.

On his next solo flight, of course, Cadet Bader did it too, finding it diverting to be straddled across the fuselage like a bare-backed rider, holding on with the heels while hands were busy tying the handkerchief.

Naturally then nearly every other cadet did it. The riskiest part was considered to lie in the chances of being found out and dismissed.

As well as flying and rugger, he was playing hockey now and also boxing. By his twentieth birthday he had filled out to a muscular five feet ten inches, with strong-fingered, square hands, ruggedly handsome with an arresting vitality in the eyes that seemed to glow vividly blue in large clear whites under the dark brow. Some of the other cadets were beginning to look upon him as a super-youth, and some of the Cranwell staff as an *enfant terrible*.

The fact is that discipline alone was never enough to curb him. He needed responsibility or some positive purpose to harness him, but he lacked both and enjoyed the sport of flouting minor regulations. They "gated" him for roaring round the district at high speed on his motor-bike, and when he was freed from barracks he did it again, more culpably, by having John Chance or his particular friend, the dark, slight Geoffrey Stephenson, on the pillion (pillion riding was strictly forbidden).

Off To A Dance

Chance bought an old Morris car for £50, and the three of them kept this banned luxury hidden in an old barn about a mile from the camp. Often they got back from Grantham after their midnight passes had expired, and climbed back to bed over the seven-foot spiked fence. More than once they were caught, but that only made the sport more attractive.

After a year they sat for exams. He struggled with his maths, hoped for the best, and afterwards, with Chance, Stephenson and Denys Field, rattled off to a dance at Grantham in the old Morris. They arrived back at the barn with three minutes to sign in at the guardroom a mile away.

Bader alone had his motor-cycle there, but that was a detail; all four festooned themselves on it, and two minutes later, after a crazy ride, he was pulling up a hundred yards from the guardhouse when suddenly a torch shone on them, held by an advancing policeman. It was a fair cop.

In the morning the four of them had a menacing interview with the squadron commander. In the afternoon Bader was fined £2 for being in improper control of his motor-cycle, and next morning the four of them went out in the car again. As they returned to the barn a hawk-eyed instructor, coming in to land just overhead, spotted them. At this trying moment the exam results came out and Cadet Bader, scholarship winner, was nineteenth out of twenty-one.

This time he stood alone on the carpet in front of the desk, and after a crisp homily the squadron commander concluded by saying: "I'm fed up with you. If you don't change considerably I shall take steps to have you and your friends removed from the college."

There was no doubt he meant it. Bader emerged a disturbed young man and received a message to report to the commandant immediately. Unhappily he went.

Air Vice-Marshal Halahan was a square-faced, grey-haired former heavyweight boxing champion who spoke in a quiet voice. Bader, rigidly at attention, listened to a dispassionate review of his misdemeanours and winced at the end when Halahan said, almost laconically: "You're wrong. I can understand your trouble, but the Air Force won't go on understanding. They don't want schoolboys here. They want men."

He almost crept out, feeling he had shrunk to about half size. To have his manhood challenged! And even worse, to know that Halahan was right! After a couple of days' heavy thinking Flight Cadet Bader was a different young man, with radically changed views of Cranwell and a potent desire to justify his place there. He even began studying maths.

In June they sat for their final exams. Next day the exam results came out, and Paddy Coote, another outstanding cadet, just beat him for the Sword of Honour. In reticent official terms the report on Bader summed him up neatly: "Plucky, capable, headstrong." His flying rating was "above average," which is R.A.F. understatement for a natural pilot (the only higher rating is "exceptional," which is such a rarity as to be almost a myth.) Then the postings: P/O Bader, D. R. S., to 23 Squadron, Kenley."

He rode his motor-cycle to London and traded it in for his first car, a second-hand Austin Seven that looked like a lacquered biscuit box on pram wheels. In this, on an August morning in 1930, he drove to Kenley, brimming with content. No. 23 Squadron flew Gloster Gamecock fighters.

Bader slid effortlessly into squadron life, perhaps a shade too confident for a new boy, but too friendly and vital to irk anyone. On "dining-in" nights when, immaculate in mess kit, they passed the port decanter, Douglas, strictly sober, joined as wildly and hilariously as anyone in the subsequent games of rugger in the ante-room with a waste-paper basket for a ball; or heycockalorum; or "desert warfare," when they grabbed assegais off the wall and stalked their fellows through oases of aspidistras on the floor while others beat tom-tom rhythms on the table.

Life was idyllic, with flying, games and fellowship, buttressed by the tangible prestige and comfort of a permanent commission from Cranwell. Most of all he liked aerobatics in the Gamecock. That same August he arrived at Kenley he was picked for the R.A.F. cricket team.

A month later, when cricket was finished, the Harlequins, the famous amateur rugger club, asked him to play in a trial game. Thereafter in *The Times* one not infrequently read little headlines such as "Bader Brilliant," "Bader Excels." A few weeks later he was picked for the R.A.F. XV.

Bought A Sports Car

By his twenty-first birthday in February, 1931, his name was becoming widely identified with a sinewy, beautifully tuned human machine that weighed eleven stone six pounds stripped, and had the temperament of a dynamo. His present to himself was to trade in his little Austin for an M.G. sports car, which he cherished.

All other fighter squadrons now had the Bristol Bulldog or the Siskin; only 23 Squadron was left with Gamecocks, and that was partly why they were chosen again to do the combined aerobatics at Hendon that year. Squadron Leader Woollett picked C Flight Commander, Harry Day, to lead the team, and all the other pilots started training hard for selection. One man killed himself flying upside down, and slowly the selection narrowed. In April, Woollett told Douglas that he was to be second man in the team, with his inseparable friend Geoffrey Stephenson, who had also been posted to the squadron, as reserve.

Harry Day was a lean, glint-eyed man who had fought as a youngster in the first World War, and now, a hawk-faced thirty, commanded instant obedience. Prone to occasional turbulence, he thought it was time to change Hendon's traditional aerobatics, so he invented five new routines of "synchronized aerobatics."

The first was typical of the other four—two aircraft would dive together, then pull out in two consecutive loops, wing-tip to wing-tip (three feet between, Day said), then up again, stall-turn away on each side into a vertical dive, aileron turn inwards so that they faced and crossed each other, wing-tip to wing-tip again, then up, up and roll off the top of a loop together (going different ways) to dive to each side of the airfield, turn back and race at each other head-on to start a new routine which included some upside down formation. It was safe enough provided no one made a mistake and provided the wind stayed kind. Day would not have tried it with pilots less cool and accurate than Bader and Stephenson.

Wild—But Practical

Strict orders said they were not to go below five hundred feet, though Bader made a nuisance of himself wanting to go lower. Typically, one of his favoured occupations was to do slow rolls "on the deck" at about fifty feet.

Day tolerated Bader's "press-on" spirit good humouredly. Other pilots might do bone-headed things on the spur of the moment, but he felt that Bader, even in his wilder moments, was always practical, would always

Consider your verdict

by

RUSSELL SCOTT, LL.B.

ALTHOUGH his £40 dinner suit was still almost new, Bert Smart had worn it several times, and he decided to have it cleaned.

At the cleaners, he received a slip printed with the words: "The maximum amount allowed for lost or damaged articles is twenty times the charge for cleaning." On the slip was also written the charge—7s. 6d.

When Bert collected his suit a few days later, he found to his horror that it was covered with peculiar white stains. No amount of treatment had any effect, for something had gone wrong in the cleaning process. Finally, he stormed round to the shop. "You've ruined this suit," he complained. "You must buy me a new one."

Politely, but firmly, the cleaners pointed out that the receipt for the suit definitely limited their liability. "This was obvious to you when you left the suit with us," they told Bert. "All we can give you is £7 10s.—twenty times the cleaning charge."

Bert sued them for £32 10s., the balance of the price he would have to pay for a new suit of the same material. In court, he argued that efficient cleaning was the whole point of the contract between the firm and himself, and that they had not done their job.

"The condition on their tickets may apply to incidents such as accidents when articles are carried in their vans, and so on," he said, "but it does not cover the actual cleaning method."

The cleaners' representative was equally definite. "The condition was clear," he said. "Mr. Smart cannot twist the intention behind it. We are liable to pay only £7 10s."

What is your verdict? For the judge's decision, turn to page 44

SOLDIERS OF THE QUEEN

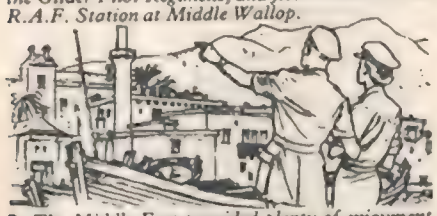
'Take it from me— it's a grand career!'

says Squadron Quarter Master Sergeant Bailey, Royal Corps of Signals

S.Q.M.S. Bailey joined the Army in a Boys' Unit. By means of the Army's educational facilities he gained his 1st Class Certificate of Education before he was seventeen (though this is not essential to promotion to N.C.O. rank). Bailey then saw service in Italy where he got his first 'stripe'. Whilst overseas, he qualified in his chosen trade — line laying — and reached the rank of sergeant. On completing his overseas tour of duty, S.Q.M.S. Bailey returned to England to enjoy long leave. Now 25 years old and an Instructor at the Signals Training Centre, Catterick, he is earning £10 a week *all found*. He and his family live in a pleasant house provided by the Army for only 15/6 a week. 'With my pay' he says, 'it's easy to save. I reckon I have every reason to be glad I joined the Army.'

1. *A linesman's work is exciting and varied. S.Q.M.S. Bailey achieved the rare distinction of qualifying in all three branches of line-laying—Underground Cable, Permanent Line and Field Line.*

2. *S.Q.M.S. Bailey had always wanted to learn to fly. He got his chance when he volunteered for the Glider Pilot Regiment, and flew Austers at the R.A.F. Station at Middle Wallop.*



3. *The Middle East provided plenty of enjoyment for S.Q.M.S. Bailey. Here he played hockey, swam, went sight-seeing in Cyprus, and found a wife in the W.R.A.F.*

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know in advance what he was going to do and then do it with judgment.

There were still other activities—cricket, for instance. Early in June, Bader was picked to play for the Air Force again, and soon there was a picture of him in the paper hitting a six almost out of the ground at the Oval. In that innings he hit sixty-five in thirty minutes—including a six, a five and twelve fours. Later that month, Day confirmed that he was to be his number two at Hendon.

The Times said that 175,000 were inside Hendon Aerodrome on the day of the display and that "hundreds of thousands of others crowded hillsides and fields outside." In bright sunshine they saw what *The Times* also declared was "the event of the day" as Bader and Day in the Gamecocks "provided the most thrilling spectacle ever seen in exhibition flying . . . ten minutes full of the cleanest trick flying, synchronized to a fraction of a second . . . the most successful of the Hendon displays yet held."

Pilot Officer Bader was an object for youthful hero-worship — dashing airman, brilliant rugger player and cricketer, and vitally handsome, especially at a service dance in the tight blue trousers and the short mess jacket with blue silk lapels and gilt buttons. Many young women sighed over him and made what decorous advances convention allowed.

Girl With Blue Eyes

From time to time he played escort to several: Patricia, and a quiet, blue-eyed girl with classic features called Hilda, a pert little blonde called June and a giggly blonde as well. His main interests were still flying and games, but he *did* enjoy the adulation and the press notices—all very stimulating to the self-confidence of a young man who was once the somewhat rejected Bader minor.

At last 23 Squadron was getting Bristol Bulldog fighters to replace Gamecocks. The Bulldog was the last word in fighters. She could do 176 miles per hour. There were minor drawbacks; she was not as manoeuvrable as a Gamecock, being heavier. Low aerobatics were strictly banned, though some pilots ignored that.

Pilot Officer Bader did. In November a flight commander spotted him doing low aerobatics and "beating up" the field. Day, who was in charge of the squadron at the time, had him on the mat and told him crisply and at length to watch his step and not to show off.

After a chastened Douglas went out Day wondered whether perhaps he should not have slapped him down harder. Bader was getting into the dangerous phase of over-confidence.

What with his Hendon success and other things on top of the volatile nature he was too outspoken. One or two resented the "white-haired Cranwell boy" and thought he was conceited. Day recognized it more as a coltish super-vitality and also recognized what others did not always see, that under the buoyant front lay sensitivity. Perhaps he could be slapped down too much? You could not force him—he would only become stubborn. Very likely, with a little firmness, he would correct things himself. But the red light was there. It was a problem.

As it happened, Day's remark about "showing off" had given Bader the sort of jolt he had had from Halahan at Cranwell; he began to watch what he was saying and shy away from ostentatious aerobatics. Also the

"Ever have one of those days when you just can't seem to do anything right?"

Springboks had arrived from South Africa for a series of rugger tests against England, and with that goal in front of him he was training harder than ever before. He wanted his "cap" so much he wouldn't even admit he had a chance for it.

On Saturdays he played for the Harlequins, knowing that the international selectors were watching, and was dismayed to feel that he was overtrained and not playing well. The other pilots kept reassuring him, telling him he would be out of his misery as soon as the selectors named the Combined Services team to play the early match against the Springboks. Last season's England fly-half cap was also fly-half for the navy. If they chose Bader instead of him for the Combined Services, then Bader was probably in for England.

At the end of November the Combined Services team was named and there it was: "Fly-half, D. R. S. Bader." It was like the moment he had seen his name on the board for the First Fifteen at school; the same kind of brimming joy, but even deeper. For days he savoured the prospect, and on the Saturday played with a dashing, high-geared vigour. Just after half-time he flung himself at a huge Springbok who was trampling for the line, brought him down, but broke his own nose at the same time. They would be picking the England team in about three weeks. Too much at stake to worry about a broken nose: he played on.

The Fateful Dare

The following Saturday he played again for the Harlequins, not even bothering to plaster his nose first, and though he tried his hardest, kept fumbling passes and spent the rest of the weekend worrying about his uneven form.

On the Monday, however, his hopes for an England cap were dashed for ever. For that morning, December 14, 1931, Douglas Bader accepted the fateful dare to "beat-up" Woodley Aerodrome and crashed his plane. That night, as he lay in hospital with his right leg now a severed stump and his body racked with shock, Bader's last hours seemed to be slipping remorselessly away. . . .

But in the morning Bader was still alive, though it seemed only a matter of time. His mother arrived, but was so overwrought that the matron gave her a room and a sedative. At nightfall Bader was still holding on, but at midnight they called Burge again, then sent him back to rest.

By morning the patient still lingered with a finger-tip hold on life. He had not recovered consciousness since the operation. Joyce told Burge that if he lasted another day he might have a chance, provided the left leg did not become septic. There might even be a chance of saving the remaining leg.

Twenty-four hours later Bader's eyes quietly opened and gave him an extraordinary experience. It was like being born again, being alive without

Consider your verdict

IN the case on page 43, the judge decided that the cleaners had not made their condition clear enough. As printed, it could only apply to "loss or damage" occurring at times other than in the process of cleaning. "The whole purpose of the contract was to clean the suit," he added, "and it was certainly not cleaned." Bert won his case. (*This is the probable verdict, based on actual cases.*)

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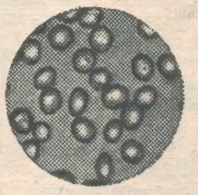

Photo-micrographs showing (above) normal blood cells, and (below) pale, hypochromic cells from a case of iron-deficiency anaemia. Reproduced from HEMATOLOGY by Prof. Willis M. Fowler, M.D., Department of Internal Medicine, University of Iowa. Published by Paul B. Hoeber, Inc.

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knowing what alive meant, unaware of the world or even his name. Sunshine flooded the room. He was conscious of objects that meant nothing for a while but then slowly focused into meaning: a cream ceiling, white sheets and then a tall girl in white with a red cape standing by a window with her back to him. It was like a fade-in of a film scene that suddenly stops and is frozen. Imperceptibly, comprehension came without any effort, and the film came to life and meaning, but with no pain and no concern, no backward memory to give depth or disquiet.

After a while he murmured: "What the hell am I doing here?"

Sister Thornhill turned and came over smiling. She had been given Bader as a "special" and had been with him nearly all the time. He saw she was about twenty-five, nicely rounded, with a strong, capable face, healthily attractive.

"Oh, you're awake, are you?" Her voice was pleasant and steady. He looked up at her impassively.

"You've had an accident," she said.

"An accident?"

"Yes. You crashed in an aeroplane."

"Oh, did I?" He pondered vacantly. "What a bloody silly thing to do!"

She laughed and said she must go because Mr. Joyce wanted to see him as soon as he was awake.

Nothing Mattered

He did not know who Mr. Joyce was nor care if he came. Nothing seemed to matter. He became aware that there was an enormous mound in the bedclothes, and remembered a similar mound when 'Derick had broken his leg at prep school and they had put a cradle over it. Must have broken my leg, he thought. But he was not really interested.

The door opened and Joyce came in, but he did not recognize the pointed, sensitive face.

"Hallo," Joyce said. "Glad to see you're awake."

Bader looked at him composedly but did not speak. Joyce made a few more cheerful sounds and then said: "I'm very sorry, old chap, but I'm afraid we've had to take off your right leg."

Bader gazed placidly at him. He had heard and understood the words but not the meaning. Politely he said: "That's all right. I hope I haven't been a nuisance."

Thornhill leaned over his body to block his view while Joyce lifted the bed-clothes and started unwrapping the dressings. It gave Bader his first reaction: an urgent curiosity to see this most interesting sight of a severed leg. But he did not want to look while the others were in the room: for some crafty quirk he wanted them outside so he could lift the bed-clothes in privacy.

Joyce looked at the right stump first. It seemed all right. He unwrapped the dressing on the left leg and saw the red puffiness of incipient septicaemia and the dead, grey signs of gangrene. After a while he wrapped it up again, smiled at Bader, said: "I'll see you again soon," and went out to find his mother and Cyril Burge.

As soon as the door had closed, Bader lifted the blankets and looked. Yes, there it was. A short stump of thigh with a rather bloody bandage round it. He thought it would look like that. They hadn't given him any pyjama pants. (He never wore pyjama pants again because trouser legs get tangled round a short stump.) Oh, well . . . he put the blankets down, not even noticing the left leg.

A Mother's Distress

His mother collapsed into a chair when Joyce told her the second leg had to come off. In near hysteria she wanted everyone to go away and leave Douglas alone so she could look after him herself.

Joyce found Cyril Burge and told him the situation plainly and lucidly. The boy would certainly die if the left leg stayed. He would probably die from operative shock if they tried to take it off, but it was the only chance. It would have to be done immediately. Burge nodded.

The door opened and Joyce walked into the sick-room again and said: "We've got to re-set your left leg, old chap. I'm awfully sorry about that. It might hurt a bit, so we'll put you to sleep for a while." He looked like a sympathetic housemaster.

"That's all right, Doc," Bader murmured obligingly, supremely placid. It did not seem to be particularly his business. Other people had charge and he was drifting with the stream.

In the operating theatre Joyce worked fast again, taking the left leg off about six inches below the knee. As he lifted it away a young nurse started crying, and then, as Joyce was sewing the flap of skin over the bone, Parry Price, the anaesthetist, who had been watching like a hawk, said quietly: "The heart's stopped."

Joyce looked up, motionless. The room was suddenly still. In a dead silence Price jabbed with a needle and took the wrist. The silence lingered on, and then Price felt the little flutter start again.

Joyce finished quickly and they wheeled him back to the room. Every

OH, JOHNNY! *by TIM*

ten minutes they kept taking his pulse and it kept palpitating with thin, fast persistence.

Some time in the night, Bader's eyes opened. Vaguely on the rim of a dim circle of light that played round him, a nurse was sitting. It was soothing to feel that he was not alone, and the eyes closed and he sank into oblivion.

Six hours later he came to again, conscious only of pain. His left leg was hurting with a bitter, steady ache that sharpened the torpid mind and began to distress him. After a while Sister Thornhill came in and said: "Oh, you're awake."

"My left leg's hurting," he complained, and she said soothingly that it would probably ease after a while. The leg kept on hurting keenly and remorselessly. Thornhill gave him a little morphia to ease it, but it seemed to make no difference: the terrible hurting went on, stabbing stronger and stronger till it was shredding his nerves all over and beginning to obsess him with agony to the point of feeling he could stand it no more.

By nightfall his eyes were sunken and restless in dark hollows, and the face was grey and waxy, glistening with a film of sweat. For a while he slept under more morphia, but soon awoke to more pain. The following morning he drifted into unconsciousness but now and then revived for brief spells, when his eyes rolled with the constant ache and his mind wandered in a vague half-world. Once he was briefly aware of his mother sitting by the bed, and then she had changed into Cyril Burge.

Joyce looked in and told Burge that they were giving all the morphia they dared and doing all they could, but he did not sound hopeful. It would depend on the patient's youth and constitution; in short, his lasting power and resilience.

Later the young man awoke and the pain had gone. He could not feel his body at all, but for some reason his mind was perfectly clear. He lay still, eyes open and head raised on a pillow, looking straight out through the top of a window at a patch of clear blue sky, and into his mind crept a peaceful thought: "This is pleasant. I've only got to shut my eyes now and lean back and everything's all right."

Warm peace was stealing over him, his eyes closing and his head seeming to sink into the pillow. It did not occur to him that he was dying; only that he was letting go, drifting down and wanting to. In a dreamy haze the mind was shrinking into a soft, deep pinpoint.

Through the slightly open door of the room a woman's disembodied voice slid into the receding clarity: "Sssh! Don't make so much noise. There's a boy dying in there."

The words quivered in him like a little electric shock that froze the drifting dream and sparked a sharp thought: So that's it. Hell, am I! Feeling began flickering out through his body like ripples from a pebble tossed in a pool. He stopped letting go and the mind was clearing; the body did not move but the brain began gripping thought and reality.

It was the challenge that stirred him. His eyes opened and, instead of looking unseeing through the window, began moving, taking note of things in the room. Sister Thornhill came in. He noted her stiff white cap and dress under the red cape. She stood by the bed looking down at him and then smiled and moved away.

As he lay thinking, quite clear-headed, the pain came back to his leg. Somehow he did not mind this time; it was almost satisfying because he felt he was normal again and had slipped away from the ethereal spirit that had been floating him to limbo. Another thought came: I mustn't let that happen again. Apparently it wasn't as good as it felt.

Some instinct told him that he had been dying in that moment. (Ever since then he has been convinced of it, and from that moment has never been frightened of dying. Later this was to have a vital effect on his life.)

The pain began to increase agonizingly again till it gripped him so that he wanted to die because it was unbearable, but now he could not die because the tortured mind could not sink back in peace. Thornhill gave him more morphia.

That night delayed shock took effect and he sank into unconsciousness that lasted two days. His mother and Cyril Burge were asked to keep in close touch with the hospital. Joyce was non-committal about the prospects. Thornhill kept rolling him over in bed from time to time to avoid lung congestion that would lead to pneumonia. It had become a personal fight with her and other nurses to save the young man's life.

On the second morning she was turning the limp body with the help of another nurse when he suddenly sat up and kissed her, then sank back into unconsciousness again. She was petrified with amazement. "Not so unconscious after all," observed the other nurse slyly. Thornhill lifted his eyelid back with a gentle thumb but he *was* unconscious.

Out Of The Coma

Bader lay in a drugged stupor for two more days. Then slowly the shock subsided and he came out of the coma.

Sister Thornhill changed the dressings that day, and he rose up with a sharp and quivering groan of agony as she whipped away the last lint that stuck bloodily to the raw wound.

She leaned her body carefully over so that he could not see that he had lost both legs. The whole hospital seemed to be aware with a sort of fascinated dread that he would have to find out soon. Thornhill was frightened that he would find out accidentally himself and be thrown back into danger by the shock.

The next day he winced as usual when she was changing the dressings and asked: "How are they?"

Now! she thought. Do it casually.

In an off-hand way she said: "Well, they took one off the same day and the other one came off below the knee a couple of days later when septicaemia set in. Don't worry about it. A man with your guts can overcome that. They've got pretty good artificial legs nowadays."

She waited nervously for the answer and was amazed when he said quite casually: "I suppose so." He was quite calm about it, and after the moment of relief and anti-climax she wondered how he had known.

In fact, Bader had not known, and still did not know. He had heard her words and answered automatically, but they had not registered a meaning in his drugged mind because he could still feel his toes and did not know anything about the phantom sensations that lead a man to feel his foot so realistically after losing his leg that he can waggle his toes in his mind. With the phantom feeling he was in a never-never land of unreality, as in a dream when anything can happen, when a man can lose both legs and still walk on them.

Later that day when Cyril Burge sat with him and the left leg was hurting again, he said despairingly: "Why does it hurt so much? Why don't they cut it off like the other leg?" Burge, a little sick at heart, did not try to tell him.

"I Wish It Were Off"

It was the following day that the boy found out, and he only discovered it then because in spite of the morphia he was in torment that sharpened the brain into a little clarity. Squadron Leader Woollett had come in to ask how he was, and Bader said: "All right, sir, but my left leg's hurting like hell."

"I expect it's bound to hurt for a bit," Woollett said sympathetically.

"Well, I wish to God they'd cut it off like the right leg," he groaned. "That doesn't hurt at all."

"Would you really like them to cut it off?" Woollett asked.

"I don't give a damn what they do as long as they stop it hurting."

"You mightn't want it off if it didn't hurt."

"I don't know what I'd want if it didn't hurt. All I know is that I'm sick of the damn thing now and I wish to God it were off."

Sitting on the chair by the bed, Woollett leaned forward, elbows on his knees, and he said quietly, nervously aware of the drama: "As a matter of fact, Douglas, they *have* cut it off."

NEXT WEEK: Douglas Bader tries his first steps on artificial legs

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Billy Graham	In Granny's Cottage
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Poor Mr. M.P.	Made Himself Heard
For One Man	A Mixed Bag
Settling Down	Sprouting
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RULES 1. First Prize for best *Bullet* received. Others in order of merit; the test is of cleverness, aptness and originality.

2. Editor undertakes that all *Bullets* received shall be accorded careful consideration by competent Adjudicators.

3. As entry-fee enclose P.O. or stamps as indicated on coupon. Fee submitted will be taken to cover *Bullets* in coupon order—any sent in excess will be disqualified. Plain-paper entries are full rate. If using P.O. make payable to JOHN BULL, cross /& Co./, write name and address on back. Coupons must not be mutilated. Forces half-rate for *Bullets* for entry-fees not exceeding 2s. if coupons personally completed and Service rank indicated.

4. Entries accepted by post only and on condition that result of this Contest (in *"Bullets" Bulletin* dated April 24 and in JOHN BULL dated May 1), also Editor's decision in any matter of dispute, are accepted as final and legally binding. Odhams' employees (and families) ineligible.

(See "Daily Herald" on Saturday, April 17, for early news of *Bullets* No. 1,930 result.)

POST ENTRY

"Bullets" 1,930, "John Bull," Long Acre, London, W.C.2 (Comp.)

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